US \$40 million

Security forces from the US Pacific Command left this week after visiting Rolpa and Gorkha to assess military needs. Five earlier missions looked into development. The teams will now put together a support package (\$20 million each for security and development) prior to endorsement by the US Congress. The RNA's shonning list includes assault rifles armoured Mi-17 helicopters, fixed wing STOL transport, communication equipment, and night vision aids. Development support will be channelled through USAID and used to rehabilitate hospitals and damaged infrastructure, and launch a



"massive" job campaign in insurgency areas. The US Foreign Military Support Programme delivers hardware directly and does not hand out cash. Sources in New Delhi tell us the US money will be handled by India to buy the helicopters from a former Soviet state for delivery to Nenal A State Department source however, ruled out this possibility.

Maoist arsenal

O, is the p

Q. Will the bombings and attacks on der infrastructure help or harm the Maoist o

The Royal Nepal Army has inadvertently let out what kind of arms the Maoists have captured from their Ghorahi. Mangalsen and Satbaria raids. The announcement of a bounty for the heads of Maoist leaders also includes rewards for different types of guns. So here is the list of the Maoist arsenal: General Purpose Machine Guns, 41mm rocket launchers, 81mm mortars, Light Machine Guns, Enfield 303 rifles, pistols and revolvers. Our own count puts the total of weapons captured at about 200 SLRs, 12 machine guns, six mortars, as well as rocket launchers and ammunition. (see also p5)

nepalnews.com

BINOD BHATTARAI

ive months after the decl state of emergency, the military stalemate continues. There is no clear winner, but there is a clear loser: the national economy.

Information minister Jaya Prakash Prasad Gupta told us last week that over a third of the country's 3,900 VDC buildings have been destroyed. 13 districts are without phones. five hydroelectric plants are out of action, and 250 post offices have been destroyed. Telecom infrastructure alone will cost Re 250 million to replace. Losses to business cannot even be calculated accurately.

But these estimates are already outdatedsuch is the acceleration of the crisis. This week, Maoists have hit telecom stations putting out four more districts: Okhaldhunga, Khotang, Solukhumbu and parts of Sindhupalchok. The main 132 kV transmission line has been hit in western Nepal, leaving four more districts without power. A Rs 70 million Radio Nepal transmitter in central Nepal was destroyed Tuesday night. It's hard to detect a rationale for such

wanton destruction of national assets. But going by the 9 April interview with Baburam Bhattarai in his party's underground newspaper, the attacks are aimed at pressuring the government to call off the army and agree to talks on the Maoists' terms.

The five-day bandh is also a part of that strategy. The Maoist militia has been feeling the heat and been forced to attack soft targets in recent weeks. They need a respite to regroup and retrain, and a a ceasefire and resumption of talks would be helpful to that end.

This week's strike and unspecified threats of an "indefinite strike" in the future are supposed to force the government to the table. It is now clear that the attacks on infrastructure and VDCs which began in mid-March weren't by local cadre acting on their own, but part of a deliberate plan to bring the government to its knees.

Either way, it is ordinary Nepalis who are directly hit. The five-day strike is estimated to



cost the economy Rs 5 billion, and the losers re mainly dairy farmers, vegetable vendors, taxi drivers, bus companies, day-labourers construction workers and the hundreds of thousands who depend on the tourism industry

Rabi Bhakta Shrestha, president of the Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industries (FNCCI) has stopped talking about his favourite topics: tax concessions, business incentives, and the investment promotion board. His single obsession now is the security situation. "If things remain the same, the economy is going to fold up in less than six months," he warns "This country should be in intensive care, it needs emergency treatment."

The gloom and doom is not exaggerated Trade, tourism, retail sales and transport, all of which were already in crisis are being kicked while already down. All this is having a cascade effect on the rest of the country "Distribution is very badly affected, the

first week of the month was a washout," says

Sandip Ghose of Nepal Lever, one of the

country's largest manufacturing operations

"Raw material transport has been hit. And

cycle is disrupted."

and civil society.

there is no use producing if you cannot send

your products to the stores anyway. The entire

Statistics don't reflect the severity of the

crisis yet, but banks are already facing

liquidity shortages, even though few are

corrowing. This is an indication of capital

flight and large withdrawals as people start hoarding cash abroad, or buying other assets.

FNCCI spokesman Rajendra Khetan

says: "Ar a time when we should be creating

employment, there are layoffs in airlines,

notels and the garment industries."

Khetan blames the crisis on apathy and

indifference among politicians, business

The mood in the business community

no one is listening and nothing is

has gotten so bad, some have decided that

the point?" says a visibly upset Narendra K Basnet, promoter of Himalayan Distillery. What puzzles many is the paralysis of emment—it seems to have given up trying to do its bit. This has convinced industry that no one is in charge. While an aggressive heartsand-minds programme may have worked five months ago, today there is no government nce in large parts of the country. When asked, ministry officials admit things are bad, but say nothing can be done until the security

moving, there is no point complaining

anymore. "I don't want to talk about it. What's

situation improves. Still, Finance Minister Ram Sharan Mahat believes the wreck may be salvageable. "We're not doing well because we cannot de-link the conflict from the economy," he explained to us Our economic fundamentals are still sound, and we can have a rapid turnaround if the security situation improves."

And that is the big "if". Lack of full

information has made it impossible to make objective assessments about the state of the war Many, including government, want to believe that the security forces have the upper hand, but the debacles at Accham and Satharia have forced them to reassess. Deuba himself told Reuters last week that the war could drag on for another "five to ten years"

If we are in it for the long haul, then sustaining losses to the economy on this scale will mean that it will collapse before peace is restored. These losses do not take into account the roughly Rs 8 million daily cost

of security operations
presently. The security Editorial forces have serious logistical limitations, One man's terror Puskar Gautam p3 and have a shopping list that includes 12

helicopters, two fixed wing aircraft, and communications equipment. Mahat doesn't know where he is going to find the money to pay for all this, and the only alternative to financing that is help for hardware from India and the United States. •

Taxing time for trekking

The Annapurna and Everest trails benefit, as trekkers pull out of remote areas.

RAMYATA LIMBU Despite assurances from the Maoist leadership that tourists will not be targetted, recent instances of extortion from mountaineering and trekking groups in Nepal have raised fears

that local cadre have their own fund-raising agenda. Nepal's tourism industry, already hit by a global recession regional tensions and bandhs in Kathmandu, is expected to be adversely affected as news of the incidents spreads through the Internet

"Climbers are an adventurous lot, but if you get more incidents of extortion, then people will just go elsewhere," says Tashi Jangbu Sherpa, president of the Nepal Mountaineering Association

To be sure, there have been stray incidents of Maoists and criminal elements called khaobadis robbing tourists in the past three years. But tour guides and their agencies who paid up had

played down the "donations" fearing that the publicity would hurt business. But now the sums demanded have gone up and local companies can no longer absorb the new costs

Trekkers in Humla were recently forced to pay \$50 each before being allowed to proceed, a trekking group has been forced to pay a Maoist "tax" on the Kangchenjunga trail, rafting companies say Maoists now come to camp at night and demand a similar fee. The Jiri trail is infested with Maoists, and although trekkers have never been harmed, they have been accosted and asked to pay up. However, no extortion has been reported in popular trekking areas like the Annapurnas and Mt Everest.

Even in Chitwan, there have been incidents where Maoists have paid midnight visits to camps demanding up to Rs 100.000. Later on, tour leaders heard they were local youth pretending to be Maoists.



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Gokarna

Our comrades have taken that

imperialism is inevitable.

nugget of Maoism to heart, and

are convinced that the demise of

Mao also used to say tha

imperialism is a paper tiger. But

60 years after Mao's revolution.

the Soviet Union, it is clear that

The Manists interpret the

help in the form of hardware and

advice from India. Britain and the

counter-insurgency operation as

United States for Nepal's

the beginning of imperialist "interference." They see the

social and economic contradic

tions within Nepal, in the region,

and internationally, as stemming

from a classic class war between

rich imperialist oppressors and

supressed poor nations

Movement (RIM) that the

epicentres of all revolutions

eousness of the cause and in

international solidarity among

like-minded leftists about the

the main actors in this larger

global commune, South Asia

chised, has become the main

tion of globalism plays out at

different levels. Socio-cultural

oppressed down to where they

are, but also, through global

world's absolute poor.

imperialism is a real tiger with

stars and stripes.



e of the things that has changed since 11 September is media handling of the word "terrorist". Even politically correct purists who used to stick strictly to the one-man's-terrorist-is-anotherman's-freedom-fighter dictum buckled under the outrage of the attacks. And as country after country joined America's 'war on terror', our government also found it useful to lump our Maoist comrades into same category.

To be fair, the Indians beat us to it. It was Indian External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh who declared our Maoists "terrorists" last November even before we'd not around to it. New Delhi's Fnolish papers, whose editorials often reflect the thinking of a certain section of the foreign policy establishment there, backtracked somewhat however, when they called the "people's war" a "national liberation

Arbitrary use of the label "terrorist" carries the danger of double standards. We will then tend to tag only those opposed to us as terrorists, while those we support (even those who use terrorist tactics) we will call good guys. And what of state-sponsored terrorism, where the armed forces of democratically elected states perpetrate atrocities against civilians? Is a group terrorist only if it is non-governmental, like al-Qaeda or Hamas?

Labels matter. Why else would the White House now insist on calling Palestinians who blow themselves up "homicide bombers"? Because suicide is proof of desperation, and points to grievances and injustice that have become intolerable. Suicide is also an ultimate act of "martvrdom"-another loaded word.

And speaking of martyrs. There used to be a time (remember?) when for decades we in Nepal only had four martyrs—the freedom fighters executed by the Ranas. Their names are burned into our memories from school textbooks. Today, the number of security force personnel who have "attained martyrdom" in six years of conflict is approaching 1,000. The Maoist side has its own growing list of "martyrs", and in Maoland there are "martyr gates" on the approach to every village.

The contest for terminology like "martyrs", "suicide bombers" and "terrorists" shows that this is also a war of words. An attempt to shroud slaughter in symbolism. And because it involves words, the mass media becomes a part of it. That is why this is currently a subject for such heated debate in journalism schools. One particular group called Minnesotans Against Terrorism (MAT) has tried to play ombudsman and spot trends in terror-labelling. It has tried to cut through the rhetoric and come out with its own definition, saying: "Calling the targeted killing of innocent civilians anything but terrorism is completely unconscionable. But even this definition has holes, as has been pointed out, since there are questions then about whether the firebombing of Dresden or Tokyo and Hiroshima can also be called "terrorist" acts

That is probably the moral of the story. Who is terrorist depends on who is talking. As for us, we will go along with "deliberate killing of civilians to achieve political goals" as the most accurate definition. But that leaves out acts such as the torching of hospital vehicles, milk vans forestry offices, health centres and agriculture extension offices. The most effective weapon in the Maoists' revolutionary arsenal is fear, and

fear is effective only when the public is terrorised into submission This is what makes bandhs "successful"

No one has any illusions anymore that the Maoists' ultimate goal is absolute power. They are not in the mood to share power with anyone. And it is clear they will do anything to get there, using the



STATE OF THE STATE

ntil 12 years ago, in the

Amusing ourselves to death

Media consolidation threatens pluralism.



imitation of the poorest fare on satellite channels, the NTV is in disturbing enough for adults, but danger of losing its remaining it is having an adverse psychologiviewers to cable. cal impact on young viewers. Short The NTV's mediocrity, of turning off the TV, there is no however, pales into insignifiway of protecting children from cance when we look at the being brutalised by insensitive

cameramen and irresponsible news The reason for my rage is personal. But there must be thousands of Nepali parents who have gone through similar ordeals Isn't it possible to show these tragic scenes with more respect for the dead? What is the advantage of bringing the barbarity of it all into our living rooms? Is it a case of ignorant producers, or are those in charge of propaganda trying out psy-war techques on the population at large Either way, it is bad news.

After the royal massacre, my son was so disturbed by the ate king, his mouth agape and flies swarming around him, that he had difficulty sleeping. Then ast week there were those rage pictures from Satbaria showing decomposing bodies being pulled out of mass graves with pickaxes. Again, he was

leeply affected and couldn't sleep. It is tempting here to blame the government ownership of media for everything. In the mantra of liberalisation, it is argued that all this would uddenly be set right with privatisation. Don't be too sure. Our experience with privatised broadcast media is not much better.

Private commercial media is often even more insidious in the control of information-it practices what John Pilger calls 'the censorship of exclusion"

Its focus on the bottom line and the need to please the disbursers of licenses makes it as beholden to the state as the official media. A free media is no longe free when it uses its freedom for partisan exposés or campaigns against political figures who are rivals of its business mentors. A glaring recent example was

the relentless smear campaign against Girija Prasad Koirala b the owners of a national daily. In its eagerness to portray the then prime minister in a had light, the oublishers went as far as to give the Maoists full play. Wild rumours went to print and on the airwayes as "news", with devastating consequences during episodes like the Hrithik Roshan riots.

This is why we have to look askance at the decision by the Ministry of Information to grant terrestrial telecast rights to Kantipur Publications, Givins one business entity such broad

Whilst I agree with Ms Lustig's

control over the electromagnetic spectrum as well as print media is nst the law in many countries Even in that bastion of laissez faire and free media, the United States, the control of both television and print media by one company in the same territory is not allowed. Here, in the absence of a strong regulatory entity, how can we trust a private business group with so much power over

The ex-hack presently running the Ministry of Information and Communication must know be familiar with laws in other countries about media consolida tion. He chose to ignore them for reasons we can guess at. This does not bode well: neither for democracy nor for a free and pluralistic press. Since the deed has been done, our only hope now is that parliament, the courts, and civil society will realise the

enormity of the risks involved.

"Imperialism interferes and fails Imperialism today is a real tiger interferes again and fails again with stars and stripes. again it interferes and fails again and this is how it invites its own end." That was Mao Zedong.

media, influences the way they think. Trade imperialism works through supra-national entities like the WTO to protect the privileges of the powerful. Military imperialism after 11 Sentember has moved from a low and especially after the collapse of intensity war to hot conflicts stretching from Khost to Basilan The US president has called Iraq Iran and North Korea the "axis o evil", the emphasise being that the "evil" has to be defeated for lasting peace. Any force against an elected government is terrorist, Colin Powell declared. Nepali Maniets automatically fell into that slot. This categorisation has in any case been made easier because the Manists have increasingly targeted noncombatants and development infrastructure directly benefiting

This explains the thesis of the Imperialist forces generally Revolutionary Internationalist have a two-pronged strategy to deal with revolution: directly by sending in troops or hardware to originate in countries under the fight rebels, and indirectly imperialist voke. What drives the through intelligence-sharing. One Nepali revolution is the doctriof the two will be visible in Nepal naire Maoist belief in the rightin the months to come, especially if this conflict does not enter a decisive phase soon. Elsewhere is the world in recent decades the "people's war". Our Maoists are US has tried both troops and intelligence. In Peru, the Ameri cans passed on intelligence on the with its social injustice, exploitawhereabouts of Ahimael Guzman. tion and large masses of disenfranleading to his capture, and ultimately the subduing of the laboratory to test RIM's thesis Shining Path. In Colombia and that total revolution is the only the Philippines, they sent troops way out of the present morass in a that got bogged down. The lesson for Nepal is clear: the best use of region with 75 percent of the the imperialist Indo-US alliance Imperialism's present incarnawill be to share intelligence. The Americans may be tempted to see some advantages in having a toeimperialism not only binds the hold in Nepal so they can keep

tabs on rumblings in India and

pluralism," #89) you state that "it

took the Europeans two hundred

ears to perfect the system." This

may be an understatement. Nepal

is actually going through a struggle similar to that which Europe went

hrough in the 1600s, circa King

Henry VIII, when states started to let

go of priestly feudal systems. Although in most western countries

citizenship is the legal birthright of

all genders and social and ethnic

classes, monarchs can still retain

tates and the civil services are

irgely secular. The systems are

still far from perfect. These things

ule over religious systems, and the

China, but they must tread

worry also about Tibet, Xinjiang and now Nepal. Chinese officials in Noida never refer to our comrades as The Maoist war has entered a 'Maoists", and have always destructive phase, a sign of reckless hurry. The leadership is confident

the rug from under

the feet of our com-

that another ceasefire, during which

No paper tiger

movement using the name of the Great Helmsman in vain. Our Manists seem confident that they are winning this war. But such revolutionary haste can also translate into an open invitation for outside powers to step in. This may not be as farfetched as we perhaps think: who could have predicted last year that there would be uniformed US military in Libang? It wouldn't be surprising if the Americans conclude that the Maoists may indeed win unless

carefully and not get us caught up

The Maoist ideologues have a

in global rivalries.

this. Comrade

different perspective on

Baburam Bhattarai in

a recent issue of his

Awaj postulates that

in helping fight

is to align with India in

China, Whether China

takes the development in

the same vein is another matter

Beijing's geopolitical focus is on its eastern flank-along the South

China Sea, Vietnam, Korea,

Taiwan and Japan. It does not

need the distraction of having to

characterised them a home-grown

the encirclement of

party organ Jana

Manism in Nepal

the Royal Nepal Army is significantly beefed up. The US and Indian positions on Nepal's Maoists are converging. By their own analysis, the Maoists say India will find more of its natural class-allies in the US and the Nepali state. These emerging alignments show that it is only a question of time before

the group will rearm and retrain, can propel it to victory in Kathmandu So a five-day bandh is likely to be followed by longer dead-end insurgency sustained bandhs to put pressure on the only by a romantic dream of a utopia as with the NPA in the government to agree to a ceasefire Philippines, The second could

and talks. The Maoists need to keep the wheels of their revolution give them a stab at power ary juggernaut turning so that they through a king-making role in do not lose momentum. A continu parliament, as with the IVP in ing military stalemate will sap their Sri Lanka energy. Also, because there is really nothing left to extort in rural areas. the "people's war" is now hurting the very people it was supposed to liberate. There is a real danger of massive disaffection, even within the rank-and-file

The Maoist leadership therefore has two options; incite a mass uprising quickly, or join the parliamentary mainstream. The first path will keep the movement bogged down in a

social inequalities, which will continue to ensure them more recruits. The faction-ridden and aimless government in Kathmandi will, on the other hand, only survive if propped up from outside

Landlocked as we are between two giant neighbours (and a meddlesome distant giant), it is difficult to see how the Nepali Maoists will win, let alone rule Despite the odds, our comrades believe that the objective conditions are more favourable as the country's economy spirals out of control and public frustration with the elected government grows. They believe that the basis of the victory will be our economic and

Even if the parliamentary parties are somehow sidelined in the coming months, there is no guarantee of lasting peace. For that o happen the rulers in Kathmandu (whoever they are in the future) will need to think about redressing the entrenched social and economic disparities. ♦

(Puskar Gautam is a former Maoist district commander from Okhaldhunga.)

SOCIAL EVIL "A blink or a wink" by Ramyata imbu (#90) shows this is a revalent problem here. I mys ave been a victim of sexual arassment, and know that it is rampant not only in the student-teacher relationship. If it

ongoing coverage of the insur

gency. Video footage of the

thoughtless broadcast of

aftermath of fighting and the

gruesome footage of corpses are



student like me, it could be worse for younger students. What I have earnt from my experience is that woman for the humiliation. Still. why should the criminal assailant oet away? We all need to speak



LETTERS

worked in a tarai town for two years and can relate to both situations described in your coverage of sexual harrassment. Before I came to Nepal. I was aware of the discriminatory treatment of women and I changed many of my daily habits to "fit in". With my colleagues and friends, this may have nted some of the harassment that previous volunteers warned me about, but it did not protect me from the daily hassles that stranger on the street felt was their right to inflict on me. But my first reaction when I saw the accompanying phot to your "Teasing tourists" article was to notice the tourists' bare legs and arms. I find myself reacting idomentally when I see such turally-inappropriate dress and vonder how tourists can be so naware of the effect of their othing choice. But, although this oes contribute to the stereotypes that feed the attitudes that lead to

sexual harassment, it is not the roo

of certain men about their right to degrade women, and their subsequent actions to cause intimidation and harm. Sexual narassment will only be success fully addressed by dealing with the erlying roots of gender inequality, not by blaming done to provoke the situation. The issue is now what women wear-it's what men do. After three years in Nepal, I will miss many things, but I look forward to reclaiming my right to freedom from unwanted ention of my body and most of all, overcoming the shame that this attention has caused me to internalise. I'm not saving that short skirts are the flag of a feminist utopia, but every woman deserves the right to be judged only by who she is, not by what she

Christine Mulks

comments about how horribly men in Nepal harass wome especially women of the kuire variety, I believe it is utterly naive to suggest that the Nepal Tourism Board will manage to educate those lewid desperados through an education campaign. The basic problem is that these young (and not so young) men have a large build up of testosterone with not much in the way of outlet. So what alternative is there to poking pinching, grabbing, rubbing, leering, jeering and generally leching at women? What is the Tourism Board going to say-"Start respecting women" or You are more likely to de whatever it is that you are after (friendship, business, informa-

tion-whatever) by being a

Jyoti Thana

ART OF GIVING

Re: CK Lal's "Fatalism, capitalism and altruism" (#89), What has happened to us along the way? Have we herome so self-absorbed and selfish that we have forgotten the art of giving? If we should receive, must we not give? Isn't that what our mothers taught us? Wake up, enlightened Hindu rich

As an American citizen, Lunder stand that America, as the only superpower, will receive interna-tional criticism from a significant minority no matter what our government's policies are. I also will be the first to acknowledge that many times American policy or IM seeks primarily to benefit itself both politically and economi

cally. However, CK Lal's "Do our

banners vet wave" (#90) is vet

another example of the Nepali

"elite" blaming everybody else but

themselves. The truth is that Nepal

has no one to blame but itself and its aphno manche culture for the situation it finds itself in. Primary allegiance to family or clan, not the common good, is the root cause of the Maoist uprising. This tree and its root have sprung not from abroad, but from the soil of Nenal Mr I al and the Nenali elite need to look in the mirror if they want to discover the cause

While it is not surprising that your readers like Dr Amrit KC took offence at CK Lal's exemplific #89), it seems to me that both parties have overlooked the obvious: Nepal is not a secular state but officially self-proclaims itself to be a Hindu kingdom. It surprise that the commander-inchief exhibits his religious affilia-

S Troutman

of General Rana's red tika (Letters tion publicly

take time to evolve, and serious fearless soul-searching, by proactive civic participants (Name withheld)

CK Lal calls Julia Chann Bloch a ceroy" (#90). To be a viceroy on has to be a governor acting in the name of a king or a king-emperor. Madam Chang, for all her strutting around, was not qualified to be a

viceroy in Nepal. That distinction has always gone to the successor of the British resident, the envoy of

the Delhi Darbar in Kathmandi

Interesting piece by Eric Steffens on the Keshar Mahal birdlife ("The return of the egrets," #90). I hope it some incentive to accommo not just the cattle egret, but all the other birds and bats that call the tall trees home. One small correction: your front page picture is of a Little Egret, not a Cattle

G Rima



NO HEALER

my brother point blank: "You

may survive, or you may die.'

ver have I heard a doctor say

such an outrageous thing to a When a "great country" denied a patient, and my brother lost all visa to my brother, even though the confidence he had mustered. he was a senior governme erv well understand that my official and had a wife and four brother's was a major operation children in Nepal, we decided to and the success rate is only go to Thailand's Bumrungrad. round 90 percent even in the JS. I cannot bring my brother . Dur decision was greatly influenced by your interview with Ruben Toral ("What people back. But I want to warn other Nepalis not to be misled by the five-star luxury and paraphemalia ealth care," #87). The doctors in Bumrungrad. Good hospitals are known for their care and nere said my brother's chance of recovery was good. A day doctors with a soothing touch. efore the operation, however, a nealing and not money is urgeon came in, said he was important there. doing the operation and told

DEMOLITION MAN Thank you for highlighting mayor Keshav Sthapith ("Mr Establishent," #90). If we had only ten leaders like him. Nepal would be

Kiran Nakarmi Dallas USA

DISS IT

"Sup dudes?" (#89) on the net Could not make head or tail of it. Was he trying to make a he indulging in this gross generalisation and over (or overt) simplification? Does he think now that he has nothing more to say about things, it is time to diss his own offspring

Dear Mr Bastakoti. (Letters.

#89) It is Kunda Dixit's ersonal choice to wear the hats he wants. If you don't like his hate or his writing don't read the column. For me, the first thing I check every week on the Nepali Times website is Inder My Hat. It is the only thing that does not disappoint these days. I hope he never

G Pokhare



HEMLATA RAI the yearning for a better life, the need to send money home to

families back home, a tempting trip that seemed too good to be true, ar oily middleman who promised everything but dumped them in Bangkok. Then: getting caught at airport customs, the trial, sentencing and years of incarceration at one of Thailand's prisons for drug

traffickers they have to convert and profess their They are all Nepalis. Take levotion to Jesus Christ. And then Chandra and Jivan who paid a Nepali employment agency Rs 75,000 each there are volunteer activists like Banøkok-based Sue Aldous, Sue for a job in South Korea nine years Ridley and Ben Parks who help ago. The agent abandoned them in prisoners with money clother and nod—no strings attached. But most of Banokok, where they were framed and were caught in a police drug all, the campaigners give the inmates a dragnet (See #9 for full story of window to the outside world, and a Chandra and Iivan). channel of communications to their Nearly two years after that stor

came out Chandra and Jivan are still Parks is a retired computer consultant who made his money in the serving life sentences at Bangkwang Central Prison More Nepalis have dot.com boom, and has decided to been caught since, and there are now 20 other Nepalis there, including devote his life to helping prison inmates from Nepal. He fell in love several women. Among them is one with Nepal during a trek, and ha who used to be married to a visited many times. Once on a trek German. He got rid of her by he saw a sign that said: "Don't framing her in a drug scam, and change Nepal, let Nepal change ran off with a Thai woman. you." That became his motto, and he says ruefully: "That did it for me, Conditions are bad- meak of

what Thais call "dog rice" (low grade now I am trapped. Parks is in touch by mail with rice that smells) fish gruel, contaminated water, and stuffy cells where the some of the inmates, and visited the temperature is always above 35 Nepalis recently in Bangkwang. The degrees. Everything has to be bought soners are behind run wire-mesh from the prison authorities: soap ences separated by ten feet, and the clothing, water. Inmates say drugs have to shout at each other to be heard and sex are also available: "If you can Parks was in Kathmandu this month to meet families of Bangkwang pay, you can buy.'

for about \$20 a month, and nationals of other countries like the United States Britain and Australia are taken care of by their embassies. But the Royal Nepal Embassy in Bangkok doesn't have much time for jail visits, let alone providing the money for

mple short-term ones like: all Nepali inmates therefore survive Nepalis being allowed to share cells so by doing laundry for better off they don't have to live with hardcore prisoners. Or, they survive on Thai criminals, being allowed to Christian charity groups which means send and receive mail more regularly, and a little pocket money for soap or postage stamps. And then there are the more

serious demands, like being included in the list of royal pardons by the King of Thailand, or asking for more attention from the Royal Vepal Embassy in Bangkok, or lobbying with the government in Kathmandu to sign an extradition treaty with Thailand, Activists feel that if the Nepal government or the embassy in Bangkok took slightly more interest, there is enough goodwill for some of the Nepalis to get on the Thai king's pardon list. The Thai authorities don't seem

to want to keep the Nepalis either and have been trying to work out ways to send them back. A draft proposal for extradition was sent to the Foreign Ministry in 2000 No. one in the ministry we spoke to had any knowledge of what happened to the proposal. Ministry spokesman Gyan Chandra Acharya has a faint recollection that there were some differences between the two sides on repatriation procedures, but doesn't remember what they

were specifically. At the National Human Rights

visits, some of them wanted me to go Commission, it is clear to member to Nepal and see their families and tell Kapil Shrestha that repatriation of them they were all right and not to Nepali prisoners in foreign jails is worry," says Parks But others do not. low on the government's priority list. because they say: "If they find out I am The government does not feel any obligation towards its citizens in in prison, it will kill them." The prisoners' needs are relatively

foreign jails. Their failure to see ja as correction homes rather than nunishment is reflected in their inability to bring Nepalis back, he told us. The government does not even

know how many Nepalis there are foreign jails. Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a circular to all Nei embassies to send their tallies of nmates, but there is no total vet. One-year-old data at the ministry shows that there were 54 Nepalis three Thai jails. Another figure shows that 104 Nepalis were arres on narcotic trafficking offences at rnational airports since 1999 alone 40 of them were in Banekol

Jivan Thapa's brother Sanad h been given the run around by various ministries in Kathmandu his effort to bring his brother back. In fact, he suspects the government is trying to make an example of the prisoners in Thailand so others are suaded from going abroad.

Nepali embassies and consulate offices are no help. Deputy Chief of Protocol Y N Paudel who has recently returned from the embassy in Pakistan says there are Nepalis there who have already completed their iail terms but they still can't return because their families don't have the money for the ticket. And the embassy itself doesn't have a budget line for repatriation

,	Nuree Sherpa	50	10
	Om B Gurung	life	9
ails	Iman Gurung	?	2
	Jivan Thapa	life	9
	Chandra Rai	life	9
	Puskar KC (Nima)	50	9
	Singh B Tamang	life	2
	Robin Gurung	life	2
in	Lok B Tamang	life	2
in	Wangel Ghale	life	17
	Santhosh Gurung	34	17
ali	Raj Gurung	40	11
	Raj Kumar Gurung	25	10
	Mangal Gurung	25	10
	Ram Bahadur Lama	33	6
in	Man Ghaley	25	10
	Gaman Gurung	25	10
ted	IN LARD YAO PRISON		
	Arun Kumar Tamang	?	?
	Beg Bahadur Tamang	?	?
k.	Dhan Bahadur Tamang	?	?
125	Ram S	?	?
	Ram Bahadur Tamang	?	?
in	Ms Bishnu Kumari Bista	life	9
k.	Ms Dewaki Bista		
nris	(Bishnu Kumari's daughter)	life	9

NEPALIS IN BANGKOK JAILS

For more information: www.bangkwang.net www.correct.go.th Mailing address:

(Name of prisoner) Bangkwang Central Prison 1 Nonthaburi Road Suan Yai Nonthaburi 11000 Thailand

Ms Kanchhi Sherpani

Pasong Lamu von den Steine IN KLONG PREM PRISON

(Name of prisoner) Lard Yao Prison 33-3 Ngamvongvan Road Chanybak Banokok 10900 Thailand

HERE AND THERE

Private eye on the press

ere are advantages—a few—to being west of the Suez, as I find myself at the moment. And no. it's not consumer choice, the latest films or ne taste of beer, although I must confess the latter is somewhat sant. No, I like being where I am at the moment because of the rich

prisoners in Nepal. "During my

variety of information and comment in the British press—easily the most unfettered and lively of the world's newspaper scenes. My first port of call, of a morning in

London or Liverpool, is the old faithful MIDDLE EAST BREAKTHROUGH Guardian. Unique among the major daily newspapers of the world, the Guardian is a nonprofit organisation, run by a charitable trust and charged by the trustees with a mission to afflict the comfortable and comfort the afflicted. That's the way all journalism should be, but isn't. American newspapers-even the best of themstrive to a painstakingly ridiculous degree for something called "objectivity". What that means in oractice is that reporters and editors go to ridiculous lengths to find the centre of any argument and then hover there like broken helicopters, shifting ever rightwards as fanatics and politicians move the goalposts from their end towards the erstwhile centre. Ask Ariel Sharon or George W Bush just

how useful that sort of behaviour can be No such scruples are found at the Guardian. Not that the paper pushes polemic, far from it. Its commentary pages seethe with all reasonable sides of Sometimes legislation is superfluous. All vou need is an irreverent magazine.

> any argument, including the agonising of the princi-pled supporters of Israel. But the Guardian's newsmanages to be both hard-hitting and sensible. It finds facts, looks at them with a human erspective and annoys the protectors of shibboleths of all sorts—be they lovers of the appalling sport of fox-hunting in Britain, or the apostles of purist market forces in all walks of life.

My Guardian story of the week is somewhat mor disquieting, however. Amid the furore last week at the resignation of the Dutch government—faced with an official report detailing Holland's complicit in the massacre of thousands of Bosnian Muslims at ebrinica in 1995—Guardian reporters uncover even more horrendous information. The Dutch report on Srebrinica is as long as any encyclopaeia, and its authors had unprecedented access to their country's intelligence information from the 1990s. So determined were the Dutch, apparently, to get to the bottom of the horrific events at

Buried deep within the report is the tion that the American Defense Department trained al-Qaeda-related jihadi groups as late as

ating in the airlift of weapons into the former Yugoslavia in defiance of United Nation sanctions. The report paints an eerie picture of the Pentagon cooperating with Iran—part of the "axis of evil" last time I checked—to help the Bosnians. The CIA and British intelligence were deeply wary of the whole thing and chose not to get involved. The Pentagon's own Defense Intelligence Agency ran the operation.

On now to The Independent, a newspaper founded in the 1980s to live up to its name and to shun the usual fodder of Fleet Street, home of the British press. There I read an unbelievable counterpoint to the Pentagon-al Qaeda story. Even as France digests the shocking result of its general election, the people of the French republic, snap up a little tome that purports to explain the entire 11 September episode as a function of the odd relationship between American generals and the jihadis. The book according to The Independent—says a car bomb and not a plane destroyed offices and killed workers at the Pentagon on that horrible day last year. A series of photographs of the alleged impact area are an invitation to readers to spot debris or evidence that an aircraft full of fuel crashed into the walls of the world's largest office building. The Independent dismisses the book as French conspiracy-mongering but there's more than a hint in the paper's tone that there are still things that we "need to know".

And finally the Cumberland Times catches my eye, a local paper of the Lak District in northern England. The banner headline here proves that sanity reigns somewhere, that people at peace can get their priorities straight. "Furniture Store to Close, employees distraught." No mention of conspiracies and nobody is blaming the Americans. Yet

Now I'm of to the pub with a copy of Private Eye, the world's greatest deflater of political and professional egos to learn all about who's lying to wh Who needs anti-corruption legislation when you have magazines like this one:

Letter from Bangkwang

The following letter was written by Puskar KC, who is serving a 50 year jail sentence in Bangkok's Bangkwang prison with 12 other Nepali inmates.

I am writing you this letter in the hope that something can be done about us Negalis in foreign jails. Lalso hope to be able to warn other Nepalis not to make the mistakes I did that landed me in Bangkwang Prison in Thailand.

My home is in Gonga Bu, and the reason my English is good is because I did my high school in Kalimpong. In 1991 when I returned to Kathmandu, I got into bad company of neighbours who smoked and got drunk regularly. My mother wasn't very happy with my new friends, and she was sad that my younger brother was following

She asked me to get a job so I would stay away from my "goonda friends. I got a job with a hotel in Thamel to pick up guests at the airport, then I got promoted to receptionist. I quit because I couldn't take leave when I wanted, I was back on the streets.

One day my mom asked me if I would like to go to Bangkok for a few weeks with some people who are into handicraft and iewelry exports. I didn't even have a passport, but they fixed it all for me. Bangkok was great, I enjoyed the nightlife and it was easy to forget my girl-friends in Kathmandu

A few days later the duys who brought me here told me we were leaving for Jakarta. We got to the airport and I was handed a bag which they said contained gifts for their Indonesian friends. I did not suspect anything because they had been so nice to me.

The customs officer tore that luggage apart, and brought out three big plastic bags with white powder. I turned around to see where my friends were, but they had disappeared. I was charged with trying to smuggle heroin and sentenced to 50 years. The Nepal Embassy was nowhere, and I did not get a fair trial. I was sent to this maximum security prison, where I met many other Nepalis with

I cursed my own stupidity and my fate. I have now been here eight years. Now, let me describe to you the conditions here. Unlike the other inmates, we don't get proper treatment because our government and embassy does not care for us. Our daily meals are rotten, we don't get enough food. We work for other prisoners just to earn some pocket money. We live here with 7,000 murderers and drug addicts, they don't understand English, we survive on Rs 20 a day donated by charitable people, and never know where our next meal is coming from. Our belongings are constantly being stolen we bathe in water that gives us rashes, we don't see the vaguest display of human warmth and goodness around us. We are chronically depressed, and sometimes feel we are going mad.

In the past few years, many more Nepali brothers and sisters have injued us here and their stories are identical to mine. They have been betrayed, cheated, or dumped by the middlemen who promised jobs in Japan. There are 12 of us here, and 100 more in othe jails in Bangkok. This jail is for prisoners with 30 vears and ahove



Prisoners from other countries are transferred back to their countries because their country has an extradition treaty. But not Nepal. There are some of us who have already spent 20 years here. That is a lot of time for a stupid thing we did accidentally when we were young.

As far as I know, two Nepalis have already died here and four others (including myself) have TB. Our families in Nepal are praying night and day for us. Through this letter, we would like our sarkar to take some time to get us out from here. The Thai sarkar is ready to have an extradition treaty with Nepal, but our sarkar is not taking any interest. If there is a treaty, we can go to Negal and complete our sentence in a Nepali jail. At least if we are in Nepal we can get support from our families. Whoever reads this letter, please put pressure on the

Nepal sarkar to bring us home.

We made mistakes. We were young and stupid. And unscrupulous people took advantage of our innocence. All these years in iail has taught us a lesson. We are now eager and willing to change ourselves for a better tomorrow. Our parents are getting older, and we took the risk of going abroad so we could earn money for them. Our imprisonment has pained them greatly, and we deeply regret with sorrow what we did.

There is nothing for us here. Our biggest fear is that Nepali society may not accept us back. But we are determined to earn our self-respect and help our country. Many of us here are sick, and we don't want to die here. We want to come home and have a meal or two of alu-chiura and dal bhat before we leave this earth.

My message to young Nepalis is to be smart and never to be tempted by the promise of instant riches and never fall into this trap. This is a dead end. Dear editor, thank you very much for your precious time and for printing my letter. It means a lot to us.

Puskar KC (iNimai)

"Just keep to the main trails..."

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from ⊏>p1

The most recent incident that got the most publicity because it went out on the internet was the mass-extortion of money from three expeditions bound for Makalu. On 5 April five heavily-armed Manists carrying grenades and rifles came nto their camps in the village of Sedua three days north of Tumlingtar and demanded Rs 5.000, cameras, binoculars and altimeters. After some discussion, they settled for Rs 10,000 per

member. An email from Makalau base camp by American climber R D Caughron said Swiss and Spanish expeditions were also

forced to pay up. The Trekking Agents Associa-tion of Nepal (TAAN) said in a statement: "To collect money from tourists, the few that are still coming despite the current situation, will further undermine the future of Nepal's tourism." It demanded that the Maoists return the money to

Security sources say Maoist

higher altitudes because of military operations in the valley could be getting desperate for funds and therefore forced to rob tourists.

Most trekking agencies in Kathmandu have been hit doubly hard. Not only have they suffered from a decline in bookings but they have also been victims of extortion from their Kathmandu offices. "The publicity from trekkers being robbed is going to hit us even more." admitted one trekking agent.

Expedition organisers have been pulling back from vulnerable Excursions, which handles largely Australian trekkers says it has seen a 50 percent decline, and has pulled most recently from the Kangchenjunga area. "We'll have to lay of staff, or even close down if current trends continue" says

Uma Khakurel of Highland Excursions. Khakurel considers herself fortunate that none of her groups or guides have been confronted by Maniete en far "We just advise ou guides to keep to main trails and

avoid confrontation." She is now directing her tourists to the Annapurna and Everest regions. Ang Tshering Sherpa, chairmar

and managing director of Asian Trekking, which currently has more than half-a-dozen climbing groups in Nepal and nearly two dozen in Tibet, has gone out of his way to make the best of things. "One has to go to the source. Go and meet dients in their home countries and tell them the facts—that there is a problem but so far no tourists have heen hurt. Relying on correspondence, email, and news reports, which sometimes exaggerate reality, doesn't elp." Sherpa acknowledges that apart from appealing to the Maoists. government, and political parties,

there's little else one can do. .

Dead or alive

We may yet turn into a nation of bounty hunters. The government has offered rewards ranging from one to five million rupees for anyone who nabs or helps nab top Maoist leaders. Informants providing information that leads to the arrest of any of those named are to not half the prize money, security and jobs. The government said it will give Rs 5 million for the killing or capture of Pushpa Kamal Dahal, alias Maoist Party Chairman Prachanda, Dr Baburam Bhattarai, the architect-turned-Maoist-ideological head of the underground "people's government" and Mohan Vaidva, alias Kiran, one of the party's most senior leaders. Second rung leaders such as Posta Bahadur Bogati, alias Diwakar Nanda Kishor Pun, alias Pasano, Krishna Bahadur Mohara, alias Amar

Singh and CP Gajurel, alias Gaurav will each fetch Rs 3.5 million, dead or alive. The government has fixed a reward of Rs 2.5 million each for Manist central committee members and one million each for local

level commanders and platoon chiefs. The government has also fixed rewards for Manist weapons—General Purpose Machine Guns (GPMGs), 40 mm rocket launchers and 81 mm mortars will fetch Rs 400,000 each. Light Machine Guns (LMGs). 100,000. Enfield 303 rifles and sub-machine guns Rs 75,000 and factory-made pistols and revolvers Rs 25 000



Note printing

The state Mint has decided to purchase a security-printing machine to print bank cheques and postal stamps in Nepal. Officials say they expect this to save the Eychenijer over Rs 140 million a year in printing hills Once the machine arrives, in about six months, all bank cheques, posta stamps, and VAT and income tax stickers can be printed in the country Sakurai, a Japanese company, manufactures and sells the machine for close to Rs 20.3 million, excluding VAT and import tax. Currently, chequebooks of the state-run banks are printed in India and postal stamps in Austria. Passports, currency notes and airplane tickets will continue to be printed abroad. But none of this will happen before the Commission for the Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA) completes investigations on a complaint filed with it alleging irregularities in the purchasing process.

Textbooks in English

The Janak Education Materials Centre will begin publishing English language textbooks in all subjects taught in grades five through 10. This is part of a government effort to wean away English-medium schools from using course books published privately in Nepal or imported from India. The Education Regulation postulates uniformity in textbooks used by public and private schools, but the state-run Janak Education Material Centre has until now been unable to publish textbooks in

Last month ministers were engaged in catfights over who took a Rs 200,000 bribe. Pokhara-based industrialist Hari Prasad Pandey, minister for commerce and water resources in the UMI 's 1995/96 minorit government, walked to the Chief District Officer's office on 23 April to file a graft case against himself, CDO Tika Ram Arval refused to registe the complaint saving his office didn't have the mandate to deal with that type of complaint. But Pandey is not backing off—he has mailed his complaint.

By law, the CDO cannot reject a complaint sent through registered mail. He either has to act on it or forward it to the concerned investigat ing authority. In a 42-page confession, Pandey says he amassed wealth through illegal practices and misuse of authority when he was a minister of state. His long list of "economic crimes" he claims to have inflicted against the "motherland" include bribing officials, laundering money and evading taxes. He has also declared his net worth-Rs 47.7 million—and wants the government to take Rs 10 million to allow him to repent. He has requested that Rs 20.14 million be left for the education of his five daughters, all of whom are studying to become doctors.





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and the Mercentage Transaction Description of the least to be a consequent. 1. p. 6. j. Leie Minswer. 6.796

Notice of Asia School of the Rev Caree.

Peace

ECONOMIC SENSE

Talk is cheap. Real peace isn't.



riminal elements. decision, but is it right for this government has begun to resemble cricker scores and like with cricker cores, people's memories now only hold on to very large numbers. More Peace is getting dearer. More

nfrastructure is hit every day, more istricts are cut off from the telecom network and more transport vehicles travelling. The insurgency and distribution channels and since it is

general public has begun following the footsteps of their lawmakers and other political leaders who left their villages a long time ago. The people facing the worst of the violence now are those caught in the crossfire who cannot

encies and help those left behind resist the Maoist onslaught. There's plenty of talk about the need for peace and dialogue, but nothing will happen as long as our political scroungers see every tragedy as an opportunity to cash in on. Our problems are beyond party politicking: which party should get how many of those who lay down arms, what faction should be in government when—and if-peace comes about. We've moved

beyond that and as Prithvi Narayan Shah said. and Maoist ideologue Baburam Bhattarai repeated recently in a newspaper column, sabai lai 22 bhava, let it be known to on and all We all need to intervene creatively, whatever our social status and ideological position. The lawyers have already begun, others should join in.

2.

There are also ways for donors to help. They need to unite and push the government to prepare a common enda. No more seminars, though We could do better with some action oriented integrated development efforts, relief packages, service delivery mechanisms—anything that will produce visible results. A US military ım was here, others might come. Just a word of caution: we can't let this ecome a matter of geo-politics, with Nepal's northern and southern neighbours misconstruing the presence of the US or other countries in a different way. If that happens, once seain the definition and price of peace might be something we don't annt to deal with



In the quest for "normalcy" we've egun to flout simple rules, not caring bout the consequences. It is a painful noment? The death toll announced by The Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation has approved a package to subsidise domestic airlines flying to remote airliefds. The plan is to take \$4 from every mountain flight ticket, \$2 from every other passenger and Nepalis are dying everyday, no one knows for what and why this has to be

> are damaged or brought to a balt. The cost of all this—to replace lost goods and vehicles and lost opportunities—is tremendous. For instance, Sauraha in Chitwan had just started to see some ourists, but with the telephone system now dead, only a daring few are now ounter-insurgency measures have hit difficult to move supplies, companies are producing less, as well as suffering

other direct losses in the process. Finally, after six years of cocktai party charter that just castigated the government, the police, or both, and sometimes applaud the Maoists, Valley residents are beginning to get what the problem is all about. For one, real state prices in the capital are rising a more and more people affected by the conflict are selling off their little all to buy peace in what is still perceived as a secure place to live. In the districts, the

afford to flee to safer areas. Political leaders must return to their constitu-

> Readers can post their views at arthabeeed@vahoo.com



FCONOMY

Honda's here

Sunrise Homes

Fibre-optic backbone

Remote subsidies

Nepali Samsonites

Last week the Syakar Company Ltd, which brings Honda town cars to Nepal, launched its state-of-the-art showroom, sales and spares facility at Dhobighat. The site also has space for customers to test drive Hondas before buying them. Svakar

currently offers four models: Honda City, 1300 cc, manual, full ontion. Price tag: Rs 2.13 million. Honda Civic. 1500 cc.

manual, full option at Rs 2.48 million. Honda Accord, 2000 co full option, automatic is going for Rs 3.98 million. Honda CRV,

buyers that other services like water, electricity, etc will be taken care of.

Road in Lalitour. The housing scheme offers flats as well as semi-detached homes, and payment options

end gets you 1,930 sq ft of space divided into three bedrooms, a living/dining room, family lounge, kitchen, puja enclosure, store, three toilets and a separate room and toilet for the household help. The firm assures

including cash down and instalment plans. The prices range from Rs 1.66 million to Rs 3.76 million. The upper

Nepal and India have agreed to lay down a fibre-optic cable along the east-west Mahendra Highway across the entire length of Nepal. Under the agreement, signed on 13 April, India will pay for the project, which is esti-

mated to cost Rs 1.34 billion and will be undertaken jointly by the Nepal Telecommunication Corporation and the Telecommunications Consultants India Limited (TCIL), and is expected to be completed within two years

two percent from the income of every domestic charter. The government requires airlines to provide a 25 percent discount to local passengers flying main routes, and an extra 25 percent to those flying remote routes

The kitty is to be used to compensate the losses airlines will incur because of the new discounts. Flights covered by the new rule are Thamkharka, Bhojpur, Tumlingtar, Lamidanda and Rumihatar and Phaplu from Biratnagar,

by the Note of Harminga, Complet, or Harmingan, Commingan, Commingan and Francisco and Thispital Bullyan, Simikot, Jumla and Salleri, The flights from Surkhet to Jumla, and Dhanoadi to Bhaiang and Baiura also

advantage of the free-trade regime the South Asian Preferential Trading Agreement

products last week, the Crusair, an upright that can be pushed and pulled in three ways and the Flite, which the company claims is the lightest hard-sided luggage. The company

(SAPTA) promises. The company made the announcement while launching two new

also plans to open a retail franchise showroom on New Road.

2000 cc, full option, automatic comes for Rs 3.88 million.

Give and take Getting tough on corruption is good. But who watches the watchdog?

existence of political parties that rely

heavily on constant cash inflows, we

of raising funds without venturing

Nepalis, the fund-raising tactics of

problem. It's the profligacy of the

This intrinsic compulsion of

organised politics has understandably constricted the CIAA's room for

commission has succeeded in settin

strict standards. Take the Lauda Air

demanding millions in bonds from

CIAA drew scathing criticism for

arbitrariness. But look at the subtext

here. If either man had managed to

raise that sum, wouldn't that have

been kind of self-incriminating?

two accused at the oddest of hours, the

political parties is not the real

manoeuvre. Nevertheless, the

investigations, for instance. By

political class.

have to accept the virtual impossibility

into the realm of shadiness. For a lot of

staying power, Upadhyaya's suggestion our current polity presupposes the iness community to draw up a code of conduct to discourage bribery merits solemn contemplation. Admittedly, you can't expect five firms ompeting for the same contract to play by the rules when none knows what kind of facilitation expenses the others are ready to bear. The global dimensions of this dilemma should prove instructive. After the Paris-based Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development came up with its Convention on Combating Bribery, major western gover have moved to outlaw acts of bribery by nationals and companies abroad. But all the smiles are on the faces of Russia's defence industry executives. while their western counterparts are up n arms over the double whammy. First, they lost their tax deductions for expenses incurred while promoting business abroad. Now they have to

compete with firms that offer cheaper Just by drawing up a duly countersigned covenant, our business community will have made a priceless contribution to encouraging probity in public life. Politicians and administra tors would no longer be the prime determinants of how much bad money is in circulation at any given moment. Moreover, the signatories would have

have to file within the fraternity. This arrangement would have to leave out baksheesh, though. No legislation or regulatory framework should be allowed to outlaw someone's token of appreciation. For one thing, we need something of enduring value to remind ourselves of our humanity. If you really have to make a distinction for legal or accounting purposes, coun advance payments as graft and after service transactions as gifts. Many people are worried that by granting the CIAA the authority to

something on paper to back up any

scrutinise ministerial policy decisions the new legislation dilutes our grimy democracy. Some have gone to the extent of describing the bills as a negation of the principal gain of the People's Movement of 1990—the supremacy of elected representatives of the people. Will the CIAA commissioners be emboldened to re-write the country's media policy? A lot would probably depend on the personality and peccadilloes of the commissioners It wouldn't take long, though, for those tempted to slap gag orders on certain stories to discover how censorious the press can become when the news peg is the CIAA's abuse of authority.

Coming back to Upadhyaya, he

goods and can still grease palms. The point is, the engines of nmerce almost everywhere are lubricated with cash. During the last years of the panchayat regime, there was a clear distinction between a commission and a bribe. The tolerance

Standing up to spinal injuries

spinal injury changed Nancy Sherpa's life. Once an athlete and "very active mom", she now has to watch every move she makes, even the small ones we take for granted. "Nothing is black and white in spinal injury. Even if your problem is reversible, the process is painfully slow and frustrating," she explains. Still, Nancy is lucky. She drives, works at her trekking office and has a very

supportive family. Victims such as Sherpa, families affected by the injury of a member, as well as professionals, all came together on 7 April to open the Spinal Injury Sangha Nepal, and the Sangha's first venture, the Spinal Injury Rehabilitation Centre at Jorpati. The centre was opened by Sir Edmund Hillary, who has seen many eninal injury victime use his two charitable hospitals in Solu

and Khumbu. This is the first operation of its kind in Nepal. While there are private and public hospitals that treat such injuries, so far as they can be, there is nowhere victims can go to learn how to live with them. The Centre seeks to provide patients with specialised care, support and counselling. In addition, they will be taught skills and given information and education that will help them remain active to the hest of their

abilities. "Counselling is as important as treatment. Patients need mental support to lead a normal life" says Dr Anil Shrestha, technical director of the Centre

very seriously injured person needs this. I'm glad I can help other traumatised people accept their new physical condition and keep up with the business of living " says Goma Dulal, who lost all movement to juvenile rheumatoid arthritis over 20 years ago. At the Centre Dulal will counsel people like Narayan Yaday, a quadriplegic. Before meeting with a road accident, Yadav was a cook and the breadwinner for his five children and wife. "When you are traumatised and mentally weak, the entire world looks gloomy," he told us from his bed at the Centre.

injuries to the spine from falls endured while collecting fodder, following livestock on cliffs or transporting consumables on precipitous trails. With the spread of the road network, there has been a sharp increase in spinal trauma from road accidents.

leged social status of women is a factor in making follows-women are given dangerous tasks like

> them treatment " says Pradeen the Ryeler Cheshire Home at visiting his centre are mostly

Life for survivors, already made difficult by their new impairments, is made worse by the lack of basic knowledge and ehabilitation facilities. Fifteer year-old Dil Maya Tamano of Kavre told us that when her injury resulted in paraparesis, worse comments from neighbours having this kind of handicap at such a young age, they said, Dil Maya was better off dead

Says Kanak Mani Dixit. president of the Sangha, "Our attempt is to reverse this fatalistic attitude and concentrate on

improving the quality of life of people who have suffered life-changing spinal injuries." Dixit himself broke his neck in a trekking accident two years ago, and survived miraculously.

The Centre, run entirely by qualified Nepali nurses, physiotherapists and health assistants, will have separate male and female wards, a physiotherapy unit and an occupational therapy unit. It has already started with four live-in natients, and will nowide rehabilitation care for up to 30 individuals, as well as outpatient support, once it starts operating to full

Women are the worst-affected. "The underprivithem victims of spinal injuries and the trauma that collecting fodder from tree tops, and families aren't

married women between the ages of 16 and 20, normally victims of

"We are part of the problem and we are ready to make a difference." Nenali Times: What is the business environment like right now?

Suraj Vaidya: The situation is not good. There is also lack of political commitment. There have been many changes in government, which has affected continuity. All top political leaders visit the Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (ENCCI) and give the sion that everything is under control. But political parties have yet to arree on a common economic agenda. We tend to wait until the last minute, we make on-the-spot decisions in times of crisis and crisis-solutions

are never good over the long run. How can confidence be restored?

Business now has one concern—peace and security. The FNCCI is worried about the eventual outcome of what is happening now. The army is mobilised, nobody knows for how long. We don't know if all political parties have the same agenda. The leaders must sit down and produce results. We hear they are talking, but what are they talking about: politics or the national interest? We'd like to see political leaders come together and say this is our single joint agenda. If that happens, I am sure that 50 percent. that the Maoist problem can be solved. The remaining 50 percent can then be taken up. We're unable to say what will happen tomorrow. We've met all political parties, big and small. We said: this is a national crisis, if you don't handle it right, nobody knows what will happen in another six

So we lack stability and focusÖ

How are businesses coping? Personally I think 11 September and the crisis we face are opportunities to reassess—look at what we have done, where we need to go, what the problems are. The FNCCI has begun working to that end. We're trying to create an environment where all say; we are business people, we want to make profits, but we also realise that we need to give something back to society. We have formed an ethics committee because the FNCCI thinks ousiness people have to come out and say we are corrupt. But it is the system that has made us so, because without that you cannot get anything done. I'm talking about corruption at all levels. We accept that we are corrunt, but also say that corruntion doesn't begin and end with us. There is another party to it. The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) has a code on, say, donations to political parties. We are trying to agree on something similar and ask government for tax-deductions on such contributions. These are very basic issues, but can have a big impact if we begin enforcing them. We will have a roundtable in June and present our assessment on

the causes of corruption to government. We are part of the problem and we are ready to make a difference.

When I began working with trade unions I didn't know how complex the situation was and how simple the solutions were. The trade unions want the hasin rights of workers quaranteed. Employers say the only reason they can't make employees permanent is because our labour law is very proemployee. Business has to be flexible, be able to make quick decisions. We need to have a clear understanding on flexibility in hiring. I don't talk of firing because that is where the problems begin. Internationally, the ILO has rules on termination of employees. We agree on the need to protect workers' rights, but industry problems also need to be considered, espe-cially in difficult times such as now. We are working out good management practices based on the Global Compact. We're also working on eliminating the worst forms of child labour from industry in 11 districts.

Would you make new investments now?

Even now I am putting up tea factories in remote areas. But my way of thinking has changed. My first factory was 100 percent family owned. The second project is different—I've given 40 percent shares to local farmers kept 40 percent and given 20 percent to my buyer. I think we need to change strategy and get people involved.

How is tea doing?

Nepal produces about 10 million kg each year. About 90 percent of that is CTC grown in the tarai. CTC growers have a problem because we haven't been able to fulfil domestic demand locally. Tea coming from India is displacing our producers. Our production cost is high, which drives up the final product cost. India has protection in the form of high tariffs and taxes: we need to at least counter the Indian measures, protect our industry. Tea takes five years to begin giving back in the hills and three years in the plains. Our farmers have no incentives or subsidies to sustain themselves during that period. Still, we can realise our tremendous potential in tea if government were to review the tariffs, taxes and domestic incentives. Last year we produced about 700,000 kg of orthodox hill) tea, this year we should reach about a million kg. By 2005 we may reach 2.5 million kg.

What is the notential for orthodox tea? Compared to Darjeeling tea we have a better fragrance. There are two types of bushes that produce good teas, the Assam variety, and the China

clone. In the hills we use the China bush which has better aroma and

lighter colour. Sixty percent of tea sold as Darieeling is of the Assam variety. In Nepal we have 99 percent China clone tea, the variety the world is interested in. From that point of view we're is a good shape. We have been building niche markets, Germany, Japan and US and the potential is

corruption, the investment cumate, and notential for new products from Nepal.

Suraj Vaidya is president of the Vaidya's Organisation of Industries and Trading Bouses that is largely involved in trading and manufacturing. Nepail Times spoke with Vaidya who is also a vice president of the FNCC1, abou corruption, the investment climate, and the

You talk about tea as one would expect you to about Toyota cars. How did the change come about?

Before the 1989/90 blockade with India, my family was involved in many products. During the blockade we were forced to run our industries on 10 itres of diesel a day, which was when we changed our strategy. We realised that our advantage would be in areas where we didn't depend on the outside for raw materials. We sold our shares in many industries and got involved in tea. I'm also looking at silk, garlic and olives. These are areas we should be investing in. With these products you need investment, care, and time. You need to be part of the product. With tea, I have realised that your heart must be in it, to enjoy it and grow with the venture. This was why it was easy to shift from Toyota to tea. We have invested about Rs 70 million already and another 30 million is in the pipeline.



n the official loobook of Nepal's

week will be grafted as one of its

parliament used fast-track provisions

approve legislation providing

sharper teeth to the anti-vice watch-

parliamentary disunion triggered by the Upper House's addition of riders

lower chamber thought they already

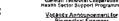
had set in concrete. The real anti-sleave

violation of the deal members of the

dog. Nor because of the intra-

defining moments. Not because

years ago-could not have escaped to plot their moves as the authorities German Technical Cooperation Health Sector Support Programme



Biomedical Engineer

contraine in , and then incereption and quarter; because on zero for the above published in the Norma Assets Management (PAU - Nemajour DEC

Pacor Responsabilities of the position

Commence of a flat consideration of the end of the commence of

suspicion. Electoral laws already bar

individuals convicted of corruption

years—which normally covers at least

decade, if both parliaments were to live

out their full term. By seeking to relax

that proviso by a year, however, our

editor turned legislator was allowing

tainted characters to sneak back into

public life while the stench of their

The effort of another member of

businessman when the legislature is in

hibernation, to shield from scrutiny

companies in which the government

has less than one-third ownership.

raised obvious conflict-of-interest

the proposal to exempt noble-

rider would have created new

issues. What was galling, though, was

intentioned misdeeds as well. This

opportunities for the more resourceful

decadence still retained its sting.

the house of elders, a full-time

from seeking public office for six

two Lower House elections. The

prohibition would cover up to a

made their judgement calls

addressed that part of the depravity

debate that has agitated Nepalis the

most. How could some people be on

the take if there weren't so many others

ready to give? Not everyone can match

Upadhyaya's candour. But, then, he is

not your ordinary ex-bureaucrat. For

someone at the forefront of the trade-

is-a-convenience-transit-is-a-right

brigade during the 1988-89 war of

attrition with India that we lost, you

end up playing a leading part in

drafting the post-embargo constitu-tion. During last year's turf war

hersusen the Attorney General's Office

and the CIAA over Indian banknotes

that weren't legal tender in Nepal, we

couldn't quite figure out on whose sid

the Supreme Court had ruled. Since

the Attorney General recently resigned

it's probably safe to award that victory

Coming from a man with such

to the CIAA.

wouldn't have expected Upadhyaya to

- Cofects hymnog of medical noughners onlying mes stroky using prescribes forms. Inhabits compute the configuration of mode, if equipment using international conversionable.

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HERESON'S PRODUCTIONS

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- Vertical and the Contract of a force
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Women candidates are encouraged to apply

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TUBORG

The Favorites

Argentina

+ Very talented squad with depth and excellent qualifying campaign . Lack of a solid central defence

After an emphatic qualifying performance and a convincing 1-0 away win against Germany last week, the Albiceleste have emerged as the biggest favourites to take the World Cup this June. Colombia coach Francisco Maturana said of the then runaway group leaders: "It is hell playing against Arnentina "

> Maturana's assessment is understandable when you consider the likes of Batistuta Lopez, Veron, Aimar and Zanetti all superstars in their respective clubs. The Argentines have so much talent, they could probably field two teams that would be serious contenders for the title. The only question is whether they can replicate their past performances in a month's time in Japan and Korea, for a FIFA World Cupwinning coach needs his players to hit form at the same time, and within the same limited

time frame. Injuries are another worry, but the sheer depth of this side in attack and defence means the Argentines have almost everything going for them, including the young prodigies, Aimar and Saviola Argentina's main weakness, however, lies in

central defence. Coach Marcelo Bielsa needs to decide who is going to partner Roma's Walter Samuel. There is veteran Nestor Sensini, who is nearing the end of his career and is not exactly blessed with speed. Roberto Ayala is dominant in the air, but he sometimes commits the mistake of holding onto the ball too often.

Players to watch; Pablo Aimar, Javier Saviola, Claudio Lopez, Juan Sehastian Veron



need arises. The Zidane-Vieira

easily has the most devastating

combination means France

France

All-round solid team Out of form goalkeeper Barthez

If Les Bleus can recapture the defensive solidity that won them the World Cun in '98, and break forward with the devastation fluidity that saw them lift the Euro 2000 crown, they will be a difficult side to beat

Coach Roger Lemerre has it all at his disposal: a solid defence, an inspirational midfield and an efficient attack. Like Amentina there is an abundance of talent in this team, which has dominated the football world for the last three years. The French have been known for their poise in defence, and that should not change in the finals, with Bixente Lizarazu and Lilian Thuram having been in top form of late And then there is Zidane. The Real Madrid star will again be the team's creative lynchpin, and the ferocious skills of Arsenal's Patrick Vieira can he supported by a host of defer sive or offensive players as the

central midfield in the tournament While Lemerre faces selection headaches that many of his peers would love to have, the current French side does show a certain weakness in central defence. I aurent Blanc's retirement from the international scene paved the way for his Manchester United teammate Mikaël Silvestre to join captain Marcel Desailly in the centre, a pairing that had trouble containing the talents of Raul in Spain's 2-1 victory over France in March last year. Goalkeeper Fabien Barthez has made several horrific mistakes this past season, and may have to be replaced. Another major blow is the loss of midfielder Robert Pires due to injury Lemerre should be able to sort these problems out, but does France still have the winning mentality that has brought them glory in the past few

Players to watch: David Trezeguet, Zinedine Zidane, Lilian Thuram, Patrick Vieira



+ On paper, one of the best attacking forces in

the tournament, lots of experience

- Poor qualifying campaign and defence

run-up to the World Cup this time has been the shakiest and most uncertain ever. But a World Cup without Brazil is unimaginable, and it's impossible to write off the four-time world champions, especially

with players like Rivaldo, Ronaldo and Ronaldinho playing together. During qualification, the team was unrecognisable at times, lacking harmony and quality. Their unstable defence usually let them down, and Brazil is not known for its great goalkeepers either. They pulled themlves through and won enough points to

the decisive match. Brazil are Brazil, and will always be favourites especially in the FIFA World Cup, which is their arena. Coach Felipe Scolari possesses a core of experienced players capable of fighting for glory in

Korea/Japan 2002, including Marcos Cafú Emerson Carlos and of course former World Players of the Year Rivaldo and Ronaldo... but can they perform as a team?



Tuborg ... Wherever you are.

			Time	
day	31.05.02	Seoul	17:15	France vs Senegal
turday	01.06.02	Niigata	12:15	Ireland vs Cameroon
		Ulsan	14:45	Uruguay vs Denmark
		Sapporo	17:15	Germany vs Saudi Arabia
nday	02.06.02	Ibaraki	11:15	Argentina vs Nigeria
		Busan		Paraguay vs South Africa
		Saitama		England vs Sweden
		C		Contract Character

Niigata 12:15 Croatia vs Mexico

Ulsan 14:45 Brazil vs Turkev

		ouppoid	11.10	nuly to Loudon
Tuesday	04.06.02	Gwangju	12:15	China PR vs Costa Rica
		Saitama	14:45	Japan vs Belgium
		Busan		Korea Republic vs Poland
Wednesday	05.06.02	Kobe	12:15	Russia vs Tunisia
		Suwon	14:45	USA vs Portugal
		Ibaraki	17:15	Germany vs Ireland

03.06.02

		Saitama	14:45	Cameroon vs Saudi Arabia
		Busan		France vs Uruguay
Friday	07.06.02	Kobe	12:15	Sweden vs Nigeria
		Jeonju	14:45	Spain vs Paraguay
		Sapporo	17:15	Argentina vs England

		Ibaraki	14:45	Italy vs Croatia
		Seogwipo		Brazil vs China PR
Sunday	09.06.02	Miyagi	12:15	Mexico vs Ecuador
		Incheon	14:45	Costa Rica vs Turkey
		Yokohama	17:15	Japan vs Russia

		Secrific		r ortugal vo rotaliu
Tuesday	11.06.02	Incheon	12:15	Denmark vs France
		Suwon	12:15	Senegal vs Uruguay
		Shizuoka	17:15	Cameroon vs Germany
		Yokohama	17:15	Saudi Arabia vs Ireland
Wednesday	12.06.02	Miyagi	12:15	Sweden vs Argentina
		Osaka		Nigeria vs England
		Daejeon		South Africa vs Spain
		Seogwipo		Slovenia vs Paraguay
Thursday	12.00.02	Course	12-15	Conto Dico un Brozil

		Yokohama	17:15	Ecuador vs Croatia
Friday	14.06.02	Osaka		Tunisia vs Japan
		Shizuoka		Belgium vs Russia
		Incheon		Portugal vs Korea
		Denises	47-45	Deleved on LICA

12:15 Turkey vs China PR

17:15 Mexico vs Italy

2ND STAGE Round of 16

Cameroon

Saturday	15.06.02	Seogwpo		1" E vs 2" B = (1)
		Niigata		1st A vs 2st F = (5)
Sunday	16.06.02	Oita	12:15	1st F vs 2nd A = (6)
		Suwon	17:15	1st B vs 2nd E = (2)
Monday	17.06.02	Jeonju	12:15	1st G vs 2st D = (3)
		Kobe		1st C vs 2nd H = (7)
Tuesday	18.06.02	Mivagi	12:15	1st H vs 2nd C = (8)

Daejeon 17:15 1st D vs 2nd G = (4) Gwangju 12:15 W (2) vs W (4) = (B)

Osaka 17:15 W (6) vs W (8) = (D)

Semifinais				
Tuesday	25.06.02	Seoul	17:15	W (A) vs W (B) = (AB)
Wednesday	26.06.02	Saitama		W (C) vs W (D) = (CD)
Finals				
Saturday	29.06.02	Daegu	16:45	L (AB) vs L (CD)
Sunday	30.06.02	Yokohama	16:45	W (AB) vs W (CD)

Group A	Group B	Group C	Group D	
France Senegal Uruguay Denmark	Spain Slovenia Paraguay South Africa	Brazil Turkey China Costa Rica	Korea Poland USA Portugal	
Group E	Group F	Group G	Group H	
Germany Saudi Arabia Ireland	Argentina Nigeria England	Italy Ecuador Croatia	Japan Belgium Russia	

Mexico

Sweden



KOREA JAPAN

+ Vast talent, excellent defence - Finding the right combination could be a nrohlem especially in attack

The biggest strength of the Azzurri is undoubtedly their defence. With some of the best defenders in the world-veteran Paolo Maldini, Alessandro Nesta, Fabio Cannavaro and Marco Materazzi-Italy could very well win the World Cup simply because no one would be able to score against them! Their stinginess and

defensive pedigree showed in Euro 2000, when they let in only three goals in eight matches. Italy's other strength is the



passing and commitment are second to none. If combinations are a major problem for Italy, there couldn't be a better person for the job, as "Trap" is one of the most experienced and successful coaches in football today

In attack, Christian Vieri appears to be Italy's first-choice striker, but like Michael Owen, the Inter Milan player is very injury-prone. Also in the frame are former Juventus team mates Alessandro Del Piero. Filippo Inzaghi, as well as Roma teammates Vicenzo Montella and

It is obvious there is a plethora of talent, but will too many possibilities undermine the team's consistency?

Players to watch: Francesco Totti, Alessandro Del Piero. Vicenzo Montella, Fabio Cannovaro



England

improving - Injury proneness, bad defensive record and likely absence of David Beckham

After a complete revival under Swedish coach Sven-Goran Eriksson, England have gradually emerged as challengers for the title. They have been impressive in qualifying, notably against Germany in Munich where they won 5-1, England may have been thrashing their opponents in the pre-World Cup friendlies, but their defensive

shakiness could show against the likes of Argentina and Nigeria, whom they join in Group F England is also a young team that seems yet to reach neak form, even with prolific striker Michael Owen scoring very consist ently. Another big blow is the injury to David Beckham who may or may not fully ecover in time for the tournament. Having said that. Fngland showed how well they can do without him after thumping Paraguay 4-0 in Anfield. England have the stuff to have a good run in the World Cup, but their shortcomings may come back to haunt them.

Players to watch: Michael

Owen, David Beckham







+ Very talented midfield led by Figo and Rui Costa, excellent qualifying run - Finishing has been a problem due to

Portugal have been called the Brazil of Europe, and the current generation of young Portuguese players had a brilliant run in Euro 2000, only to be stopped by Zidane's golden goal penalty in the semi-final. Portugal have been in excellent form over the past few years, and topped their difficult qualifying group which included Ireland and The Netherlands. The latter will not be playing in Japan and Korea

after failing to qualify. Everyone knows what Luis Figo can do-his incredible dribbling and runs can turn any game around. However it is AC Milan's Rui Costa who will be decisive to the Portuguese campaign, Like Figo, Rui Costa has the ability to take an entire game into his own hands and has done so many times with his former club Fiorentina. The question is whether he can perform as consistently for his national side.

Portugal also play arguably the most attractive football of any European side, their fluid midfield passing combination has left most of their opponents out of the game. But the team tends to crowd the nidfield at times, and sometimes doesn't use its possession effectively enoughtheir only major problem is inefficiency in scoring goals despite dominating posses sion. This could be a cause for concern especially in world class matches where every opportunity counts.

Although Portugal lack the more "complete" squads of their illustrious rivals, their recent performances give you the feeling that they will create a huge impression this year on the world stage.

Players to Watch: Luis Figo, Manuel Rui Costa, Sergio



TUBORG... WHEREVER YOU ARE

NEHT-a-Crowd

ISLAMABAD - In the run up to the 30 April referendum on giving Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf five more years in power, the government has been ultra-sensitive to media criticism of Musharraf's

plan to stay in office through the

vote. Reports have dubbed his rallies 'rent-a-crowd' and called the

gatherings less than what B-grade

political parties can muster. Last

Sunday, this tension resulted in

police haton-charging journalists

during a pre-referendum rally in

Faisalabad. The government has been especially irked by an

editorial in the English daily The

elected under his plan to establish

at the grass roots, the paper said:

real democracy by devolving power

News. Criticising Musharraf for

using the 200,000 councillors

The Case of Myrna Mack



Guatemala to become a democracy and supported the 1996 Peace Accords that ended our decades-long civil war. But for Guatemala to truly enjoy the fruits of a new era, global efforts must help our country develop the legal, judicial and political courage to confront its past.

That history includes the brutal 1990 murder of my sister. Myrna Elizabeth Mack Chang. At the time, Myrna's murder symbolised the savagery of a 36-year-old civil war in which government forces killed over 200,000 Guatemalans. Now it is an icon of our democracy's unfulfilled promises. The 12-year judicial iourney we have made in pursuing her case underscores the intransipen

An anthropologist, Myrna studied the Mayans and other indigenous Guatemalans forced to abandon their ancestral homes during the worst wars of the civil war. She visited remote areas and heard

easy and heard, she became an enemi of the state—her work exposed the barbaric policies practised against the displaced populations, uncovered the ruth behind state actions, and called riohts Myrna's scholarly work made her an "internal enemy". On 11 eptember 1990, as Myrna left her office, two men stabbed her 27 times. /inicio Cerezo, head of state at the ime, later informed law enforcement authorities that Myrna was "targeted because intelligence reports indicated that her work posed risks for the ounterinsurgency effort.

As chief petitioner in her case, I have ught justice in Guatemala's courts for 12 years. In 1993, ex-Sergeant Major Noel de Jesús Beteta was sentenced to 25 years in prison, making him the first state agent and first member of the army so punished. Beteta's conviction was only a partial victory. He was partly responsible for stabbing Myrna, but in me organised. Guatemala, human rights abuses begin

at a much higher level. Responsibility for Myrna's death bottlenecks that provide easy cover for defendants and permit the state to must be shared by the men in charge evade responsibility. Evidence and wernment security in September procedural documents are lost or 1990. My task is to insure that a destroyed, documents key to the legal general and two colonels are held process are altered, state security is seally accountable for their roles in woked to deny information. Add to the chilling process that led to this many Guatemalan judges who Myrna's assassination. The Supreme function as agents of impunity rathe Court ordered an investigation of these than servants of justice, and a legal military officials to determine their system that can be manipulated by the defence through frivolous lawsuits. responsibility. A military court issued a warrant for their arrest. In 1999, Still, the struggle has gone from the another judge ordered their trial. In technical, legal, and political arenas, June 2001 a date was set for the trial, closer to a hearing in the courts. The naking it possible at last to present the exposure has given the Myrna Mack Foundation and other civic efforts the evidence against these individuals This first effort of Guatemala to try chance to propose ways to modernise

To recover from its decades-long insurgency and counter-insurgency Guatemala needs to confront its past.



and democratise the justice system. indefinitely because the defendants' But there are many roadblockslawyers appealed the case. Achieving indicial reform, conceived 16 years as even these successes has been difficult and strengthened through the peace accords, is sadly still being debated. the police investigator was assassinated indoor have been threatened witnesse In name Guatemala is a fledgling democracy. In reality, power cont to remain with the military high ave fled into exile. I have been harassed and campaigns to discredit

command and political and economic Terror works. So do bureaucratic conservatives. We lack a truly democratic climate where criminal behaviour that the state previously supported is prosecuted. Such an nment needs the political desire to dismantle state control. strong and independent agencies, adherence to international human rights conventions, and a commitment to justice. The international community must push Guatemala toward a better, more just future.

(Helen Mack is member of the the Center for Justice and International Civil Rights. In 1992 she was awarded the Right Livelihood Award .)

So you want to go to Canada?

MONTREAL - Think Canada only wants immigrants with PhDs or computer degrees? Think again: Butchers and welders are just two We've had a lot of people come in the trades areas-welders, carpenters, metal finishers, machinists, mechanics," says Gerry traditional areas of immigration, with the Philippines the highest, once here. In 2000, over 70,000 permits were granted to temporary workers, a slight increase over the previous peak a dozen years earlier. Other areas of shortage include construction, engineering. truck transportation and food services and accommodations. (IPS)

GENEVA - The EU has denied that it seeks to privatise all public services, including water, as stated in confidential documents. mental organisations. Internal EU documents, leaked by the NGOs, contain the petition for privatisation that the EU is to present in the negotiations underway at the WTO, say activists. Sources from the WTO and EU denied—though with different levels of emphasis—the possibility of such privatisation. Mike Moore, WTO director-general. privatise public services, including water supply." Anthony Gooch, banking services, the generation and supply of electricity, tourism and

Three-way development

LONDON - A three-year-study has brought out a new development model that brings together corporations, governments and communi-ties. The Tri-Sector Partnership proposal follows an experiment with 30 projects in 20 countries. The projects, carried out by a group of 120 companies, NGOs and government agencies calling itself Busi-ness Partners for Development (BPD), is a move to find a middle path between hostility to corporations and absence of private investment. The approach is based on the idea of pooling the core competencies of the three sectors, James Wolfensohn, president of the World Bank which co-sponsored the projects, said: "The currency of community development is not just money; it is knowledge and experience." An example of the approach is a project in Venezuela's Bolivar state. involving the Canadian mining company Placer Dome. The company built a health centre in partnership with the central government, the local health authority and an NGO. (IPS)

CANBERRA – "Anti-terrorism" legislation proposed by the Australian government would undermine international human rights standards and should be rejected, human rights and community groups told a Senate committee inquiring into the draft bill this week. Amnesty International has expressed alarm that the proposed legislation—the Security Legislation Amendment (Terrorism) Bill 2002—would undermine international rights standards by reversing the onus of proof to and also remove the right to silence. The director-general of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation, Dennis Richardson, defended the proposed legislation, but agreed when asked if "terror-ism" is a value-laden term. The Law Council of Australia, which appeared before the committee, described the proposed definition of terrorism—modelled on the British Terrorism Act passed in November between government members and members from the opposition Labor and a progressive minor party, is likely to be split on the

Kyoto in trouble again

OTTAWA - The Canadian government is hedging on its comm ratify the Kyoto Protocol because the EU opposes Canada's demand originally agreed. Prime Minister Jean Chretien told the Canadian. parliament this week that his government will ratify Kyoto "one day" but would not set a deadline. The prime minister said that clean energy credits are the major stumbling block to ratification. Canada wants a 30 percent reduction on the greenhouse gas emission cuts required under the accord because it exports natural gas and hydroelectric-Union opposes large credits, and EU environment commissioner Margot Wallstrom said last week that her 15-state community will likely oppose Canada's quest to obtain export credits. An environmental spokesman for the Canadian government said he believes it still wants to ratify the deal, but is feeling the heat from business lobbyists and provincial governments in energy-producing regions

groups that have been admitted into the country recently as one of the world's richest nations deals with a shortage of blue-collar workers. Clement assistant deputy minister of immigration in the western province of Manitoba. "Our major source countries have been followed by Germany, the former Yugoslavia, the Ukraine and China. The country has long filled labour shortages with temporary workers who are permitted entry only if they already have a job offer and with the understanding that they cannot apply for permanent residency

Public goods, private providers

attributed to the bloc that were distributed this week by non-novernsaid it was "simply untrue" that the organisation's General Agreement on Trade in Services would "somehow require developing countries to spokesman for the European Commission's trade division, stated, "We do not intend requesting that public services be done away with." The intent of the EU reportedly entails privatising all postal, financial and

Another man's freedom fighter

those accused of "terrorism", so that they must prove their innocence, 2000—as "unaccentably broad imprecise and unwieldy". It is particulate larly critical of actions qualifying as terrorism if they are done with the intention of "advancing a political, religious or ideological cause". The Senate Legal and Constitutional Committee, which is evenly balanced

that it be allowed to cut greenhouse gas emissions less than it ity-so-called "clean energy"-to the United States. The European of the country. (IPS)

Oil diplomacy



ANTOANETA BEZLOVA

of Chinese Communist Party chief Jiang Zemin before he steps down this autumn underscores two fundamentals that will shape China's foreign policy in the coming years. Beijing's criticism of US heremony and the Chinese rush to satiate the country's growing oil and energy needs underpin the two-week tour that took Jiang to Libya, Nigeria and Tunisia and ends this weekend in Imn's capital

With highly-publicised diplomatic appearances in Libya and Iran-

which the US regards as "rogue despite its pledge to support the US 'war against terror', Beijing disagrees with Washington's 'axis of evil' and 'rogue nation' foreign policy. "Jiang's visits show that China will carry on its own diplomacy and strengthen its traditional good relations with the developing world." says Professor Guo Xianggang, a researcher at the China International Affairs Research Institute.

That is only one side of Beijing's charm offensive in Africa and the Middle East. Grounding Beijing's statements of friendship signed in

China takes on US domination, and finds new sources for oil.

capitals from Tripoli to Teheran is China's insatiable thirst for oil A net importer since 1996, China has been Tunisia and Libva, while relying or the Middle East for over half its current oil imports. In Tripoli Jiang attended the signing of an oil pact between China National Petroleum Corporation, a state-owned Chinese oil giant, and the Libvan National Oil Company, which opened Libva's oil fields to Chinese exploration. Visiting Nigeria—Africa's largest oil producer-liang promised a visit from a Chinese trade mission of "thousands of Chinese businessmen" Already the sixth largest oil producer in the world. by 50 percent shortly and sell more oil directly to China. Although Jiang's visits were

arranged some time ago and carefully scripted, they occur amidst renewed ensions in the Middle East. Violence between Israel and Palestine and its impact on international oil markets and prices have highlighted China's wing reliance on imported oil. Despite inflated prices in the Middle East, last year China imported 70 million tonnes of oil, compared with 36 million tonnes in 1999. With nual economic growth at 7 percent. China's imports are projected to rise to 100 million tonnes by 2010, nearly a third of its projected total oil demand of 320 million tonnes

Last week, Chinese oil officials called for more diversified oil supplie to offset the country's vulnerability to fuel cost fluctuations. "We will have to enhance our oil supply from southeast Asian countries," Li Yizhong, head of Sinopec, China's largest oil firm, told the Boao Forum for Asia. Southeast Asian oil is safer, but considered inferior in quality to that from the Middle East. Industry watchers also believe China must look for lessexplored territories where western oil

companies are not firmly established "Our correspondent's report on how În Libya, Nigeria and Tunisia, the local body system is being Jiang pledged investment and abused to fabricate a victory for President Pervez Musharraf in the referendum is not surprising as it duplicates a tradition in politics that the military regime had swom to eliminate." The president is expected

presented China as a powerful ally to the Muslim world. The first Chinese leader to visit Libva. Jiang visited the nremises where Libvan leader Muammar Qaddafi's daughter and some 3,000 other people were killed during a 1986 US bombing raid. "America destroyed houses but it will not succeed in destroying Libran values and principles," Jiang said. He spoke strongly in support of the isolated Arab nation, which Washing ton has placed on its list of state sponsors of terrorism: "China is against linking the terrorism with a ertain nationality or religion."

These remarks distance Beijing from Washington's commitment to fight the 'axis of evil'-Iran, Iraq nd North Korea. Oft-fragile relations between China and the US are in trouble again because of Washington's increasingly public show of support for Taiwan. Mainland China regards the democratic island of Taiwan as a rebel province, which split from the motherland after the 1949 civil war. Reuniting with Taiwan, by force if necessary, is one of the Chinese leadership's primary goals in the

World's cheapest anti-AIDS drug

BANGKOK - Since the start of this month, a state-run pharmacy in northern Bangkok has seen a two-fold increase in the number of patients seeking anti-HIV drugs. Close to 20 patients with HIV are purchasing the drugs daily, say sales clerks at this drug store that sells a range of drugs made by the Government Pharmaceutical Organisation (GPO). That is double the number of people with HIV who submitted doctors' prescriptions for the anti-retroviral (ARV) drugs before. The pill that the state drug-maker is marketing, called GPO-VIR, is sold for about 45 cents per tablet. A month's supply thus costs \$27, as opposed to the \$450 that a month of AIDS drugs produced by nternational pharmaceutical giants would cost. Besides the price, this new pill is also unique as it contains three separate drugs, all part of day instead of three tablets twice a day //psi

Rights in Malaysia

PENANG- Activists here fear the imminent leadership changes in Malaysia's Human Rights Commission (Suhakam) could render the body even more impotent. The changes come as detainees under the Internal Security Act (ISA), which allows indefinite detention without trial and has been used several times in the past 12 months, are on hunger strike to press the government to charge them in court or release them. This month the two-year terms of Suhakam's inaugural commissioners expire. Musa Hitam, chairman of the commission, has declined reappointment. He had come under fire from rights groups for suggesting that in the aftermath of 9/11 human rights should "take a back seat". Two other commissioners expected to be dropped or to leave service, a former Chief Judge of Malaya and former University of Malaya law professor, have earned plaudits for working courage despite difficult constraints. NGOs say the selection committee should comprise parliamentarians of different political affiliations, rights groups and civil society. Suhakam's high point came last year when it produced a scathing inquiry report against police brutality and recommended easing curbs on freedom of assembly. (IPS)

Rediscovering "civilisation"

If we want to enter a civilise

21st century, there are lessons from East Timor.

landelide in her Sunday's elections. With 89 percent of the 378 538 ballots counted, Gusmao (see pic), poet-guerrilla leader-statesman, had about 80 percent of the votes. He will be inaugurated on 20 May, as the UN withdraws m a two-war stint of transitional administration

But before that, on 1 May, East Timor will declare its independence—for the second time. The first time the island did so, after Portuguese colonisers withdrew in 1974, it was immediately overrun by

Indonesian troops. Their occupation until 1999 extinguished a third of the population (some 200,000), but not the independence movement. In the 1999 UN-sponsored referendum, the East Timorese voted overwhelmingly for independence but Indonesian armed forces and their militias voted with their weapons, leaving thousands dead. hundreds of thousands displaced, and physical infragructure in rains

Mercifully, elections for a constituent assembly that took place in August 2001 were peaceful, even festive, passing leadership to Fretilin, the party perceived as representing the independence novement. Emerging from centuries of colonialism and accumation the Fact Timorese have been advised by consultants from inter-governmental and nongovernmental organisations, multinational corporaions, and overdeveloped states, on how to deal with the challenges of independence.

But most of us hail from states where independ ence as popular sovereignty is fast eroding and where this century's technology camouflages social relations of a much older order. Somewhere along the route to a civilised 21st century we got pulled back into the 19st. The model of equilibrium or social contract

achieved in the most advanced European social welfare states, and envisioned since World War II by so much of the world as a distant goal, has lost its resonance

Utopias aside, the idea of a social system relatively open and democratic, fair and equitable, and creative and productive, is no pipe dream. We have seen many at local and national levels in the past, and a few—the Scandinavian global trends suggest that we could eradicate mass poverty and achieve a nore hospitable world.

The obstacles to civilisation are not lack of technical or economic know-how We know how to produce and conserve, to regenerate and recycle essential goods. We know how to redistribute money and expand opportunity, how to provide for "human resource development" and how to care for those with special needs.

The resources are not lacking: they are maldistributed. The black-hole density of the current concentration of economic power, and the techno logical sophistication with which it is continuously re-concentrated, make the political task an awesome one. The process of incorporating or re-incorporat ing the non-affluent into economic decision-making must call forth all the vehicles mobilised in the last two centuries-organised labour, racial-, ethnicand gender-based social movements, multi-sector and multi-class political parties.

Like bacteria that have developed resistance to antibiotics, the untamed 19th century version of capitalism has returned in more virulent form. Γο limit the mobility of money, globalise the opular regulation of it, or at least buffer Inerable peoples from the subversive potential of some trillion dollars sloshing around in cyberspace everyday looking for quick and dirty ways to reproduce, social activists need new radigms and more effective strategies and

Perhaps in this the East Timorese have more teach in this matter than we do. They have learnt that each-against-all individualism reaps only a nothing-left-to-lose kind of freedom; that security can only be collective, and that it ultimately lies in the symbiosis and

mutual commitments of a just community. • (IPS) (Jan Black is professor of international policy studies at the Monterey Institute of International Studies and author of Inequity in the Global Village: Recycled Rhetoric and Disposable People.)





. Where the tales are as tall as the mountains

Succulent steaks and burgers bountiful, with a vegetarian variety. The friendliest bar around the most convivial fireplace between Tibet and Timbuctoo, Live band on fridays!



Hard lessons he IMF finally recognises the failure of its big bailout policies—all too

evident in Thailand, Indonesia, Korea, Russia, Brazil, and most recently in Argentina. Big bailouts allowed countries to briefly maintain overvalued exchange rates, which allowed the rich in these countries to get their money out at more favourable terms than they might have done otherwise. That allowed western banks that lent imprudently to get repaid. As overvalued exchange rates—even if maintained for only a short period—further depressed th economy, the country had to repay billions of dollars in IMF loans.

The problem was most evident in the 1998 Russian bailout, where only after the "failure" - after the devaluation of the ruble - did growth resume. The billions lent to Russia quickly wound up in the Swiss and Cyprus bank accounts of Russia's oligarchs. All this was evident when the money was lent in July 1998, but today Russia's people are paying for the IMF's mistakes. Argentina provided the coup de grace to the IMF's big bailout strategy.

I, and others, argued for years for a greater reliance on standstill agreements, restructuring, and hankruntcy The IMF has come around, but the conflict of interest should have been clear all along—the IMF, as a major creditor, could not also be the bankruptcy judge. The Fund recently proposed alternative procedures that might deal with the problem, and regrettably, the US Treasury immediately threw cold water on the proposals. John Taylor, Undersecretary of Treasury for International Affairs, suggests matters should be left to the market. All that is needed, he suggests, are "collective action" clauses allowing the majority (or a supermajority) of a group of bondholders to impose their will on a minority, to prevent scavengers who, in

the past, bought up small stakes in a bond issue and used their position to extract

Taylor, a distinguished macro-economist, has paid little attention to recent developments in economic theory and experiences in economic policy in the arena of bankruptcy. Collective action clauses are important, but not enough. The IMF long advocated the hands-off market-oriented approach to bankruptcy resolution, and it has mostly been a disaster. Korea and Malaysia ignored IMF advice—their

governments took an active role and followed extensive restructuring. Those economies recovered fast. Countries that relied on IMF advice didn't fare too well. Economic theory holds that there are incentives for some market participants

We can't let the US bankrupt the IMF's new bankruptcy policy.

to delay a resolution, and that these are particularly costly in situations such as those in East Asia and Argentina, where corporate distress is prevalent and the economy faces a major downturn. Such negative incentives are why bankruptcy law in America allows judges discretion to force recalcitrant creditors to accept a resolution that is in the broader interest. Why should principles that make

> sense within countries not be applied in the mational arena? There needs to be an international arbiter. But wha

dance should be given to this international bankuptcy referee? There's no simple answer to the ropriate design of bankruptcy law or regulation. Th has also experienced a fierce debate over bankruptcy eform. Bankruptcy can't simply be delegated to echnocrate There are efficiency issues but also istributional concerns. The IMF, being linked to inancial markets, is likely to push for rules favouring hose interests. More balance is needed. The principle of America's Chapter 11 bankruptcy law—the provision which allows rapid reorganisation of firms to maintain economic activity—should underlay the new rules.

The fact that the US can veto even these modest IMF roposals illustrates a fundamental weakness of current rnational economic arrangements. In the UN five untries hold a veto—largely a historical anachronisn India, once a British colony, does not; France does. Th

notion that a single country can exercise effective veto power seems inconsonant with basic democratic principles. Were America less bent on pursuing unilateralist policies, this might not make much of a difference. But the Bush Administration not only ignores the basic princis of economics, but also those underlying international cooperation. The IMF is trying to create an alternative. The world cannot allow America to vet ire offerts (Project Syndicate)

(Joseph Stiglitz, professor of economics at Columbia University, was formerly chief economist and senior vice-president of the

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Media monopoly?

Nepal Samacharpatra, 21 April



Kantipur Publications to operate a national elevision service has sparked off new debate in Nepal. Kantipur Publications publishes five. newspapers and newsmagazines and also operates an FM radio station. It is internationally mandated that allowing a media house to operate all forms of mass media is dangerous, because that allows it to control information to serve its own interests. In order to avoid this danger even larger democracies such as the US and the United Kingdom have not permitted a single media organisation to run hrnadrast as well as print publications.

The UK's Radio Authority and Independent Television Commission also exercises some restrictions in the broadcasting sector. Britain's 1996 broadcasting law restricts an organisation involved in national radio broadcasting from getting involved in television, and vice versa. Similarly, a publication house commanding more than 20 percent of market cannot enter national-level radio and television broadcasting Publications commanding less than 20 percent of market are allowed to apply for licences, but permission can only be granted on the basis of public support.

The Nepali government issued a license to Kantipur Publications for terrestrial television broadcasting on 17 April. Kantipur has been publishing newspapers for nine years and since 1998 has been operating Kantipur FM in Kathmandu with its relay transmission centre in Dhankuta.

In Europe, mass media establishments are not allowed to work in both broadcast and print media so that no individual organisation can "cross subsidise" its products, creating unfair competition or a monopoly. Senior journalist Hiranya Lal Shrestha believes allowing a single establishment in all sectors of mass media could create a monopoly that will have a negative effect on the county's politics and economy "Allowing a monopoly of a single media house in all sectors of mass media is as dangerous as allowing foreign investment in mass media," claims Suresh Acharya, president of the Federation of Nepalese Journalists. He added. "It is a threat to the whole nation. This could control the process of information dissemination, and manipulate public opinion on various national issues."

Experts believe that the lack of clear legal provisions on foreign investment and whether one media establishment can operate in all kinds of mass media channels is resulting in confusion and that leaves the regulations open to contrasting interpretations to suit individual interests. Some media experts believe that allowing an establishment to enter all sectors of mass media should not be interpreted negatively. Others claim that the issuing of the license constitutes a misuse of authority.

Journalist-turned-parliamentarian Hom Nath Dahal said Europe's Time publication is linked with the TV

channel CNBC, India's Sahara TV channel and India Today magazine are both involved both in publication and broadcasting. The government's decision must thus not be judged in isolation from international

"The government can be criticised if it allows one party to enter both print media and broadcast and prevents another party from doing the same. But if it selects one particular party from a competitive bid, it should be allowed to do so " said Dahal. However, he also believes that there is a threat of a monopoly if the same party is allowed to be involved in all kinds of mass media.

Kailash Sirohiya, managing director of Kantipur Publications claims that the creation of a monopoly is impossible in the present open market economy. "Going against the national interest and creating a monopoly are out of question if an institution is aware, and committed to serving the nation's needs and the interests of the audience," he said.

Minister of Information and Communication Jaya Prakash Prasad Gupta said the government decision fully complies with the National Broadcasting Act and that the decision was taken in accordance with all legal procedures. "Our concern should be our own needs and our own legal foundation. International practices and legal provisions should only be given secondary consideration." Gupta said.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK



Anyone can kill them (Maoist leaders), bring their heads in a bag, and take away the prize money in the same bag

> Devendra Rai Kande Minister of State for Home in Rajdhani, 24 Apri

Since Budanilkantha School ha been accepted as collateral, this gentleman wants to put up ingha Darbar as collateral

ा कि के ने पहर Kantipur, 20 April

Praving for peace Aruna Uprety in Rajdhani, 19 April

राजासानी

THIS PAGE CONTAINS MATERIAL SELECTED FROM THE NEPALI PRESS

From 14 April (Baisakh 1) I have heard of simultaneous pujas being performed in seven Nepali cities. We are supposedly praying that the ongoing war ends, and that peace is restored. Looking at the healthy pundits performing the rites one gets the mpression that, if nothing else, the prayers will at least bring the priests peace—all that they get for performing the rites would not have come their way without

I want to ask the pundits: if praying works, why did they wait so long? They could have started praying back in 1990. They may say there was peace in 1990 and that so there was no need to pray. But then another question arises—what sort of pundits are they if they couldn't foresee the future? How could they not foresee what our leaders would turn out to be? Now when everything has gone down the drain, they are praying and giving the people false assurances.

If, as the pundits say, we can make peace by praying, here is a request to them "Oh learned ones, please perform a puia that can kill the germ that encourages our ministers to be corrupt Make them forget their hunger to steal money at all costs. A puja that will make them return the money they have taken in different deals-Dhamija, Lauda RNAC, Saiha Yarayar

If we can actually perform rites to bring about peace, it is ossible our pundits will be invited to Afghanistan Israel and Palestine, opening another opportunity for foreign employnent and ending our foreign exchange problems. Our leaders would be good, the country would have more industries, and to one would be hungry. Not only would we be able to take food to the Karnali region, but ven sweets.

Tell me, panditji, are you eally interested in bringing peace in Nepal? If you are, instead of burning rice or praying to stone idols or building temples, why don't you perform the rites of hard work and productivity? Why have your nuise been unable to teach anyone the values of hard work? Instead you teach people to believe in fate and how to you in allegiance, hoping that will take care of all their problems. If pujas could bring peace, there wouldn't have been mass murders in Guiarat after the prayers in Ayodhaya. Or were the killings in Gujarat directed by Ayodhaya's Ram?

The reality is differentthere is more chaos where there are more prayers. There are prayers at Pashupati even morning and evening. Why do the poverty and stench around the temple not disappear? If prayers brought peace the thulabadas (those in positions of power and influence) wouldn't be involved in stealing idols from temples and selling them abroad.... Our pundits pray and conduct pujas because they haven't learnt any other form of hard work. They explore the world through the Internet and relevision, but still want people

to believe and live in a world the villagers also become modern, they will stop offering money (at the puias)

Dress Code Yubaraj Ghimire in Kantipur 23 April 23, 2002

abiliti di un

After the referendum [in 1980] RP Koirala had to return from the main gate of the royal palace even though he had an official invitation. He didn't have the official grey coat. He had his international image, personality and nationality and had gone to the palace in his national dress, but the colour of his coat was more important than his other qualities. If we could be similar sticklers, as disciplined in our proclaimed aims and their mplementation, perhaps Nepai

could have gone much further

Our government bodies still treat journalists and photographers as though they were overnment or civil servants. If not, why is it still mandatory for invited journalists to wear the national dress during most state organised programs? Things have changed somewhat from 12 years ago, when the postings, transfer nd even assignments handed to iournalists from Gorkhanatra the RSS, and Radio Nepal were decided by government bodies. Private sector media is established and is moving forward in a



The success of the private media has compelled the state to owned media. Even within these rganisations people are coming to believe that state-owned media should be given more reedom and their employees should be able to work like real iournalists. Journalists and civil servants have different mandates. Security officials must be able to accept these changing sentiments. After all, a photographer may have one or two official events to attend, but a whole host of other assignments too, and it is uncomfortable to do all this in a suit or daura suruwal. The official bodies need to realise this, or the unfortunate day might come when labour unions themselves

raise this issue. But moves to relax the dress code must come from within the royal family. In the past year His Majesty has himself given many audiences not in strict national dress, but the national cap and unofficial attire. When the late King Birendra went to London for his health check up, he gave audiences to individuals and groups in the Royal Garden Hotel. Nepal's Ambassador to the UK, Singha Bahadur Basnet, and under secretary to the press secretariat Shekhar Dhungana were also present with His Majesty, who was wearing a kurta, aligarhi pyjama, and Nehru jacket. Nobody present was sporting the national dress and yet their nationality or respect for and lovalty towards the monarch were not under suspicion. Why then was it compulsory for photographers to wear the national dress when King Gyanendra laid the foundation stone for the Ashok Binayak in Kathmandu or during

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Prince Paras' program in the Natural History Museum? Talks. referendum Interview with Dr Baburam

Bhattarai in Jana Awaj, 9 April On the possibility of talks and a negotiated

settlement: "Yes, we've always kept the doors open for talks and a peaceful resolution, and we will continue to do so. Remember

that we aren't talking only for the sake of talking, but to find a forward-looking political resolution for finding a solution to the people's problems, which are now like a festering wound. In the previous talks, the reactionary government side did not understand the idea of a forward-looking political resolution (if it did. it pretended not to). Through all three rounds of talks, it assumed we were ready to surrender under the existing political regime and neither presented an alternative proposal for political resolution nor had the courage to accept our proposal, which led to the breakdown of the talks Forgetting this bitter truth Sher Bahadur (Deuba) stupidly went around telling intellectuals, and radio and television that we were traitors. He lacks intellect If there is anyone who has a little more grey matter and can understand our forward-looking political solution and wants to talk, we are willing to immediately declare a ceasefire and sit down to talk, Chairman Comrade Prachanda's pres releases state this and so the ball clearly lies in their court. If that situation arises, we want to remind you that even the five-day Nepal bandh can be called off?

On a referendum on whether a constituent

assembly is needed: "That is another shrewd move by the (king) to consolidate his position by creating a rift between the revolutionary forces, the masses, and the political parties that are talking about constitutional amendment. This is like (the late king) Birendra. who had a referendum to decide whether Nepal should have a reformed Panchavat or multiparty democracy, and to protect the Panchavarin 1968 (2036) We'd advise that there is no need for another referendum to decide between a constituent assembly and reformed multiparty democracy... In order to take a political leap today, there are two basic preconditions: handing over the right to make and promulgate the main laws of the country-the constitutionto the sovereign people (or conducting elections to the constituent assembly), and building a national army or neonle's army "

(The newspaper's press line states it is published in India, and carries the email address: no az@vahoo.com).

n environmental journalist of the finest calibre. Kedar Sharma is also a poet—a poet recently returned from a long sabbatical in the world of NGOs and INGOs. (Poetry does not pay rent, after all.) In the long poem below, he speaks against the exploitation of the Bagmati river, whose waters are used, without much heartache, for sacred rites and sewerage alike. Sharma decries the hypocrisy of those who hold the waters of Baomati holy, and he likens its abuse to the exploitation of

when degraded, lose their lives servicing men. From Baghdwar to Chobhar Flows the Bagmati

Nepali pirls who—when revered—lead the stunted lives of goddesses, or,

All possibilities at birth all upsurges of adulthood-

who can ever say they'll come to pass'

Who can foretell where we'll walk where we'll flow whether over the course of a lifetime we'll expand or wilt?

even as it forms a few poolsthe river advances It moves towards a goal

The river can diverge anywhere It can converge anywhere

When allowed to flow freely it displays its own grandeu and much pride in itself

Certain things are fixed

in this is the river's being A dam determines everything

Without anyone noticing. the potted bodhi tree degenerates even as it is daily worshipped

Just as hundreds of thousands of panchakanya virgins and navadurga goddesses lead diminished lives

though they are worshipped tens of times Withered bodhi tree Shrivelled life

The expansion of the tree the flow of the river

are they worshippe after being forced to a halt? Stop the ringing of bells and the blowing of conch shells Put out all these incense sticks and lamps!

Cast aside this sandalwood and these rice grains!

Don't place unity stains on devotion! Allow the tree to grow Allow people to progress don't pray!

Your prayers have cloaked all wrongdoings

Let water flow in the river

a country is neither soil alone nor soul but the soul of the soil and the soil of souls What then is a river-

standing by the riverside ghat

Or shore? Oh, those who buy and sell dreams of healing Bagmat by piping in water from across the high mounta speak with your hand placed on your heart speak on the vow that the king be holy speak on the path of your ancestors' ashes

Will anything brought to a temple turn into a deity? Will anyone settled in this land turn into a Nepali? Will anything poured in from the shore turn this river into Bagmati?

A girl sold to a whorehouse in Muglan after contracting AIDS

Down a river of tears she flows disgrace revulsion pity struggle to survive will to live She must survive, en che'll curvive as long as her breath remains

A river is lifted from the shore and taken to the city There she is played with made to dance and to give pleasure and when all that can be tasted is tasted and polluted

Down a river of her own tears flows Ranmati disgrace revulsion pity struggle to survive will to live She must flow, so she'll flow as long as a trickle remains

Banished from the city the tired, infected, wounded water

she is chased back to the shore

and hauling the city's much-mourned corpse moves forward like a funeral procession

The city is elated it sees itself purified the city is eager

but the death rites for its values are being performed

Yet the river is silent Keep going, keep going

hetween a city with countless prospects

and a river that has no choice

Let's see who'll survive till the end!

A mockery: The highway of civility, itself, suffers an accident Shattered milestone

Shattered resting place Shattered journey

The river yields not creativity but oblivion Standing at Bagmati's shores the entire city sings a song of ingratitude

It's not water that flows in Bagmati these days

Day after day the city is eager costly speeches costly commitments costly seminars

> But all at once and sometimes with no provocation all joys sizzle Their flames, dying out snill onto the streets and flow towards Bagmati

Even despair is costly in this city)

The city gets giddy on costly perfumes

and loses itself in costly courtship plays Dancing, leaping about, shining as brightly as it can

then goes to wash up in the Bagmati

(A mockery! Even the city's impotence is costly)

Decked in costly outfits The city consumes costly resources wears powder, lipstick, rouge and gorges on costly recipes

The city leads a costly life and in the end at Ranmati's shore (Ah sometimes with price tars still affixed)

Three-fourths of the three cities' earnings flow into those waters everyone's despair all impotence

and the waking states of many others Treachery, sin, deeds performed for purification

the rainbow shades of blood and sweat are visible in Bagmati's waters

Your form is visible/My form is visible in this water A mirror flows in Bagmati

Nepal's most expensive water flows through the Chobhar gorge

People can always float ford the shallows build bridges if not ride boats, ride ships

People will cross water by any means But if by chance a river

flows into a current of people gets immersed in the ocean of a city it can't cross it can't breathe It drown:

Through the Chobhar gorge flows Nepal's most lifeless water

This poem is translated with the help of Wayne Amtzis

Double Dorie and a dancing monk.

DANIEL B HABER

first met 19 year-old Raj Bajracharya (nicknamed "Buzz") in an Internet cafe, beaming at me from under his spiky haircut and latest space-age, aluminumrimmed shades, signing out of a chat line. We exchanged email addresses and he said "Vou must come to my birthday party on 14 February!"—also Valentine's Day and Lhosar.

Upon entering the gates of Thamel's Station Pub, the doorman greeted me like Stanley meeting Livingstone, "Daniel, I presume They had been expecting me for some time and so, without having to pay the Rs 200 entrance fee. I was rythms of a disco beat and strobin lights. And this was only 4:30PM en before the emergency Kathmandu's discos offered weekens "day discos" and many teenybonners

were hirren with Saturday Afternoon Fever There were about 25-30 party-goers, all Nepalis in their late

teens or early 20s, mostly onys, and

most of the couples on the dance



indication of their sexual preference Laid-back Buzz was the enitome of 1950s cool, but some of the other dancers were hot and sexy. One hunky guy, who was the cynosure of the floor, really kicked up a storm although his

feet. The teenage disco dervish wore a black rank-ton that showed off his well-built chest and arms which he was waving above his gyrating head, and he vogued like the hieroglyphic gestures of some ancient Nile priest. "Who is this guy," I asked Buzz, bu neither he nor his friends from good middle-class families seemed to know the mysterious, male Cinderfella. I sa on the couch taking in the talent, like Andy Warhol at Studio 54, now the name of another hot, Thamel disco.

equally hunky partner proved to be

less than twinkle-toes on his two left

The DJ played a good eclectic mix from Harlem hip-hop to Hindi filmi music. The most popular was "Dun Mam Dum" from the 1970s film about pot-smoking foreign hippies in Kathmandu. Then came the choru: that everyone joined in screeching 'Hare Krishna, Hare Ram!' Here was

ex-hippie and ex-Hare Krishna for whom Kathmandu was once an exotic destination, second only to Marrakesh, But in 2002, post-11 September, here we were in Thamel and except for moi, not a hippie or tourist in sight. Here was another lost generation going to afternoon discos and as hip as their MTV counterparts anywhere in the world.

I, the only foreigner at the party, an

When Dorie danced, he seemed to exorcising demons from his soul. Although he was born in Nepal and educated in South India, his soul was akin to those tantrik shamans and galloping horsemen of the Tibetan plateau. I boldly walked up and complimented disco dervish after he finished twirling like a Kansas tornado To my surprise, the young man seemed quite touched, politely thanked me and, like some celebrity, autographed his name. Dorie Lama. my notebook with the note,

"Thank you for your kindness. When I asked him if he was a student, he confessed that he was a monk. I had been just about to dub him "Disco Dorie" but when he

having to keep his disco gear in a secret trunk in the monastery. hidden from the stern head monk-I thought "Double Dorie" would be the more apt moniker. He reminded me of the mischievous hero of the Bhutanese movie The Cup, about the voung Tiberan monks, secret football ans who had to sneak around the abbot to watch the World Cup on a rented television. Dorie confessed to going to a friend's house to watch MTV and learn the dance steps.

and as I said good-bye to Buzz and his friends, Dorje was sitting outside on the stairs perspiring after another dance mber, contemplating the pedestrian traffic, some grungy backpackers, a newspaper hawker. He said good-bye and invited me to his monastery in Bodhnath where he is a teacher of some of the 500 young monks housed there. but added, "Don't tell my teacher!" A couple of weeks later I got a

I left before the party was over

ephone message at my office. "He informed me, "but he said his name wa Double Dorie" ◆

EXHIBITION Paris—city of lights Exhibition of photographs, 30 April-9 May, 9AM-6PM, except Saturday at the Alliance Française, Thapatahli, opposite Rotary Club. OrOganised by French Embassy and

Synthesis of tarai art by SC Suman. 8AM-6PM, until 30 April, Indigo Gallery, Naxal. 413580

New dates - Festival of War based on episodes of the Mahabharata. Annual drama production of Studio 7. Shows cancelled: 26 and 27 April. New dates 28 April, 3/4/5/10/11/12 May at the Naga Theatre, Hotel Vajra, duration 1hr 15 min, tea and show Rs 700 reduced student tickets available. vajra@mos.com.np. 271545 Nepal Education and Book Fair 2002 Discount on academic and

general books, study abroad information, on-the-spot admission to foreign universities and colleges, career guidance, contests and more, 3-11 May, Bhrikuti Mandap exhibition hall.

 Peace rally Bhadrakali-Shahid Gate-Tripureswar-Teku. Ends near martyr's tree, Teku, Pachali. 3.45-5PM, 26 April. Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation Workshop from 29 April-3 May organised by ELD.

eld@wlink.com.np. 524202 Friends of the Bagmati Special invitation to college and schools students, watch press for details. friendsofthebagmatinepal@yahoo.com

- Dinesh & Pemba Live every Friday 7PM-9PM, Himalatte Cafe, Thamel. 262526 Down Memory Lane Teesta plays tunes from the 50s to the 90s, Wednesday nights, Rox Bar, Hyatt Regency Kathmandu. 491234
- Live music by Catch 22, Friday nights at the 40,000 ½ ft Bar, Rum Doodle Restaurant, Thamel 414336

- Beer Mug Club Talk beer, drink beer. Monday nights, Rox Bar, Hyatt Regency Kathmandu.
- Sizzling Singles Buy one single malt drink, get one free. The Rodi Bar, Hotel Scaltee Crowne Plaza, 273999
- Classic teas Thirty teas including all Dilmah Tea's herbals, greens, blacks and Oolongs Also Ilam, Darjeeling, Makaibari and more. The Coffee Shop, Hotel de l'Annapuma.

- Vegetarian delights 50 percent off on all vegetarian items at any outlet during lunch. Hotel de l'Annapurna, 221711
- Wet and Wild Summer Swimming with buffet lunch and free bottle of beer or soft drink. Adults Rs 444, children Rs 222 plus taxes. Saturdays and Sundays at the Godavari Village
- . The San Miguel Brunch Brunch, live music and unlimited draft beer. Rs 600 plus tax, Satur-
- days, The Fun Café, Radisson Hotel. 411818 The new Roadhouse Café Completely redesigned with separate bar seating and coffee bar. Original Mediterranean specialities, and wood-fired pizzas coming soon. The Roadhouse Café.
- Cakes, Bakes & Baguettes Pastries, puddings, oven-fresh breads, Shangri La Bakery.
- Home delivery available, 412999 Krishnarpan Restaurant Six-16 courses of ceremonial Nepali cuisine in authentic setting, Dwarika's Hotel 479488
- Weekend Brunch Rs 350 per head, special package available with bowling. Oriental and continental lunch or dinner by the pond. 1905 Boardwalk, Kantipath. 225272
- Vegetarian Specialties and clay-oven pizzas at Stupa View Restaurant & Terrace, Boudha. 480262
- Authentic Thai food Everyday at Yin Yang Restaurant. 425510
- . Paddy Foley's Irish Pub A wide range of drinks and food. Live music on Wednesday, Thurs day and Sunday nights. 416096

- * White rhododendron getaway at the Horseshoe Resort in Mude, three hours from Kathmandu. Two days of rhododendron walks in forests, package tours at \$30 per day, all meals and sauna included. Fmail resort@horshoe.wlink.com.np.
- All-round entertainment Desserts and cookie-making for children, hiking and picnics for outdoor enthusiasts, ambience, books and bar for others. The Fort Resort www.mountain-
- retreats.com, 226977 . Behind the Wall Two nights bed and breakfast with add ons for \$99 plus taxes for one or two people. Dwarika's Hotel, for details.
- Taste the difference Cosy Nepali-style house on an organic farm in Gamcha, south of Thimi. Up to Rs 1,200 per person per night including meals. aaa@wlink.com.np.

For inclusion in the listing send information to editors@nepalitimes.com

NEPALI WEATHER

The satellite picture taken on Wednesday at noon shows the massive buildup of thunderstorm cells across central and eastern Negal. The influence of moisture from the Tibetan plateau meeting rising hot air from the Indian plains will continue to bring rain into early next week. Expect the cool spell to continue till at least Tuesday. When the heat picks up again, it will in turn trigger more localised thunderstorms caused by residual water vapour. High passes covered with new now up to 4,000 m. Night temperatures will remain in the 14-15 range.

KATHMANDII VAI I FY













Hindu Nationalism: Origins, Ideologies and Modern Myths Chetan Bhatt Berg, Oxford, 2001

Bhatt examines the history and ideologies of Hindu nationalism and Hindutya from the end of the 19th century and evaluates the social and political philosophies of its main thinkers. Hindu nationalism's central claim is that it is an indigenous product of authentic Indian ethnic and religious traditions. Bhatt argues that it is in fact based on relatively recent ideas, frequently related to western colonial influences ike Romantic and Enlightenment rationalist ideas

Condemned to Exploitation: Trafficking of Women and Girls in Nepal: Building a Community Surveillance System for Prevention Yubaraj Sangroula

Kathmandu School of Law, Kathmandu, 2001 Rs 700

The author examines the gender relationships in Nepal's current social structure, prostitution and other modes of trafficking, and recent trends, and analyses the causes behind trafficking. He asks what legal framework is available to counter the practice and through an examination of the social and economic marginalisation that contributes to it, suggests how and why community action is the best



Radicalism and Violence in Agrarian Structure: The Maoist Movement in Bihar BN

Manak Publications, Delhi. 2002

Rs 760 Prasad argues that changes in agrarian social formation the post-colonial era, and the emergence of democratic institutions alienated traditionally disadvantaged as well as influential classes/ castes. Various power groups launched 'Caste Senas' that worked through violent, extra-constitutional means,

> Collected Essays MN Srinivas Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2002

Re 1 328 MN Srinivas' work is seminal in the development of sociology and anthropology in India. His methodologically rigorous, yet accessible, essays bridge theory, method and fieldwork and track changing realities. They are grouped under Village Studies, Caste and Social Structure, Gender Religion, Cultural and Social Change in India, Sociology and Social Anthropology in India, Method and Autobiographical Essays

which placed democracy in crisis and in turn led to another agrarian crisis



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CILITURE AND SOCIETY

hy AVIDIT ACHARYA



Saroj Aryal's lean physique in

providing the audience with a false

ense of raw and ruthless power, both

key to his character. In addition, the

nipulation of speech of Surya

Maharian's Baddarayan bring to life

exaggerated changes in tone and

hen does moral righteous ness win over rule of law Can the taking of one human life by another ever be ustified? What about revengeon't an eye for eye only making both sides blind?

All appropriate and timely questions in the context of the present conflict in Nepal. But these are the same age-old questions of righteous ness, justice and compassion that people have been trying to find inswers to since the age of the Mahabharata. And how pertinent that Studio 7 should decide to adapt the Hindu epic at the Hotel Vajra at this present time.
Directed by Sabine Lehmann, the

production was staged in collaboration with the renowned Yakshagana Theater of South India Yakshagana, a form of theatre in which words and music merge with dance, gestures, eye and body language, are competently adapted by the Studio 7 crew Duryodhana's rage and Krishna's erace are magnified by an accommani ment of fast drums and graceful melodies. Shakuni's exaggerated dance and eye movements combine with

MIN BAJRACHARYA

ake a trip on one of the numerous luxury cruise ships operating in

south-east Asia, and you might find yourself closer to home than

you expected. No. dal-bhat hasn't yet taken on the status of

om left to right: Dil Bahadur Sarki (Pokhara), Nar Bahadur Gurung

Dang), Madan Rai (Itahari), Ganga Rai (Dharan), Lekh Bahadur Tha Pokhara), Om Gurung (Jhapa), Ambar Gurung (Kathmandu), and Lil

"How can you kill your own people and be happy?"

The second act of this shorter-than- ensure justice, so can breaking them usual Studio 7 production dramatises the battlefield at Kurukshetra. A fighting dance tells the story of the death of nobles and "cauldron of hate", narrated by three soldiers, one played by Lehmann herself. (Her best line: How can you kill your own people and be happy?") The dance is followed by a scene in which the inability of Arjuna, played by Ishwor Dangol, to take up arms against his kin is influenced by Krishna's reminding him of his duty As Krishna bolsters Ariuna's spirit, his words in the play concisely echo the text of the Gita. Then there is the famous mace duel

Duryodhana, which ends in the role of the chamberlain in Duryodhana's thigh being shattered by Duryodhana's court a powerful blow from Bhim. Krishna The production is based on two tells Rhim to break the rules of mace. ne-act plays of the Sanskrit dramatist fighting by hitting Duryodhana below Bhasa who lived 2 000 years before the waist. The remaining part of this act the much-acclaimed Kalidasa In the is dominated by the judgement of first act, Krishna plays the Pandava Ralaram, played by Rajendra Shrestha. envoy to Duryodhana's court. in which he takes the position that Duryodhana's belligerence as he tries Rhim should be punished for breaking to arrest the envoy is in stark contrast the rules of war. By the end, however, a to Krishna's mellow words of tolerance poignant discourse between and wisdom. But even Krishna. Durvodhana and his young son brilliantly rendered by Salil Subedi, Durjaya ends in all accepting the loses his cool when pushed to the edge triumph of righteousness, and breaking by Durvodhana's uncompromising the cycle of revenge. Duryodhana and warlike stance. realises that this is retribution for his

Krishna and Durvodhana, played many misdeeds in the past. by Sanieeb Dhakal, are the only Accepthhama (Puma Krichna Dangol) haracters that talk directly to the audience. Krishna is composed and lone dissenting voice. convincing. Duryodhana is loud and comes across as ludicrous. The scene is thus narrated through the lens of Krishna's judgement.

Sail away home

Every sentence in the script has echoes in modern society—globally and within Nepal Can a civilisation ever be based only on legislative owers? Can we fathom of the roots o human evil, or the fountainhead of enlightenment? The play forces us to ask questions about the times when human beings may be required by circumstance to act outside the law, or take the law into their own hands, for purpose greater than the law can identify. Can rules ever foresee in Nepal in the past 12 months-so between Bhimsen (Karma Gelek) and cataclysmic that the laws of the land

> dramatically with a chant of peace: shanti, shanti, shanti. And vet it still whispers painful truths about our own society and culture. We are inclined to ask, "How do human actions contribute to the evils in our midst? As with all Studio 7 productions, the heavily-accented delivery is not a distraction after the first five minutes. and instead lends a certain authenticity to the English depiction. The props are what we have come to expect at the Vajra: superb. The timeliness of the selection, the rendering of the dance and music elements, the adaptation of the script and, last but not least, the intimacy of Vajra's Naga Theatre make this is a production worth watching. And, when you relate the on-stage drama to the unfolding events in the nation at large, you are forced to think hard during the drive back across the

son of Duryodhana's preceptor, is the The domination of Krishna's udgement in the first act and that of Balaram's in the second illustrate the riddles of morality: rules alone do not Bishnumati.

cruise security officers.

faraway Himalaya.

Andaman Sea, they were even more surprised. There is nothing to beat being able to watch a fiery sun setting into a still sea reflecting

Dil Bahadur Thapa from Pokhara is a senior officer who has just

completed his three-year term, and he said I was the first Nepali he'd

had the pleasure of serving on this hoat. Another senior officer, Lil.

he is round the clock, responsible with the rest of the team for all

Thapa, who is originally from Kathmandu, described to me how busy

aspects of security on hoard. It's hard work, but they seemed hanny earning a good living, travelling and serving as excellent roving-

ambassadors for Nepal. "After they talk to us, most guests tell us their

next holiday will be in Nepal. There is tremendous goodwill for Nepal.

Dil Bahadur said. If there are people who deserve a medal for giving

our country a good image and promoting Nepal, then these seven or

hoard the Gemini Superstar are it .

mushroom-like limestone islands, and talk in Nepali about the

be justified

events-like some that have transpired

just don't suffice? Climax resolved, the play ends to Close And Personal

It is the fact that many of the staff on these cruises are Nepali. And it's not just ex-Gurkha security personnel protecting cargo ships from pirate attacks in the Moluccas. there are now Nepali waiters and pursers as well. On our first day on the

Gemini Superstar's Andaman Sea Cruise that was making its way from Singapore through Malaysia to Thailand, my Australian friend Lealand Penton and I made our happy way down to the cocktail bar. We were served by a smiling man with a face of the cast commonly called "Mongolian" in this part of the world. He could be Filipino, we thought. But it was a naggingly familiar kind of face. So we asked and, of course, he was Nepali. Tei Gurung told us. that there were seven other Nepalis on board, all British Gurkha alumni. trained for two years in the Philippines to qualify as If I was surprised to find so many Nepalis on a cruiseliner in the



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26 APRIL - 2 MAY 2002 NEPALLTIMES



Under My Hat |

by Kunda Dixit

eing a nation of chronic optimiets, our jovial and carefree temperament makes us Nepalis able to overcome any adversity and confront all challenges that fate may have in store for us.

Luckily, we have astrology to help us in our ability to anticipate events and therefore psychologically prepare ourselves for any mischief that the planets, in cahoots with the constellations, may have up their sleeves. Without this astrological Early Warning System we could very well be caught unawares as we go about our important task of

For instance, if it wasn't for the Department of Astrology and Astrophysics at the Royal Nepal Academe of Scientologists and Technocrats (RONAST), the underground comrades would have been blissfully unaware that a planetary conjunction would favour a five day national shutdown. It is our good fortune that Nepal's alert astrologers saw this coming, otherwise we may have squandered the banned days by inadvertently going to work.

For those of you who may have missed this news item in a Kathmandu daily last week about a conference that was convened precisely so we can predict the future even more

accurately, I quote verbatim: Crystal-gazing to stay: Astrologers Kathmandu April 17—

Although astrology has carved a considerable niche among believers in Nepal and other places, sceptics still hound the scientific basis of the art of prediction. In order to protect astrology from vanishing, an association called 'Chinese-Tibetan Astrologers Academy' was established.

Negative forces are decreasing the importance in our lives," said Astrologer Ganesh Baira Lama, At the inaugural session of the academy, astrologers practicing both Chinese-Tibetan and Indian astrology today called for the protection of both forms of astrology stating that they are facing a danger of

disappearing.
Speaking at the conference, Dr Keshar Jung
Rayamajhi, chairman of the Royal Council, said that astrology is especially necessary during times of crises and expressed concern over the "abnormal condition of the country at the present moment.

As far as I can tell, the good doctor is spot on. He has hit the ball right on its head in the bulls eye. There is no gainsaying that we have been deficient in the employment of the Chinese-Tibetan astrological techniques. It's time to find out which animal rules our year. As Mao said: "There is an animal that hides in all our hearts."

Year of the RAT: 1936, 1948, 1960, 1972, 1984. Makes a great underground leader, but basically a loner. Famous rats: Mick Jagger, Hulk Hogan, Zhou Enlai, Comrade Cloud.
Year of the OX: 1937, 1949,

1961, 1973, 1985. Please don't mind our saying so, but rather stubborn in your ways. Famous oxen: Amold Swarzenegger, Josef Stalin, Ferdinand Marcos, Comrade Awesome. Year of the TIGER: 1938, 1950,

1962, 1974, 1986. Cunning, sharpwitted, a creature of the night and can turn into man-eater. Famous tigers: Roxanne Barr, Margaret Thatcher,

Indira Candhi, Anagha Naglakanna Year of the RABBIT: 1939, 1951, 1963, 1975, 1987. Opposite of tigers, but sure-

footed and sensitive. Famous rabbits: Ben Kingsley, Roger Rabbit, Popeye.

Year of the DRAGON: 1940, 1952, 1964, 1976, 1988. Don't commit, or push yourself too hard. Admit that not everyone finds you attractive. Famous dragons: Emperor Bokassa, Osama bin Laden, Queen

Year of the SNAKE: 1941, 1953, 1965, 1977, 1989. Maintain a wellbalanced diet and slither regularly. See a doctor if your venom count drops. Famous snakes: Frank Zappa, Che Guevara, Baby Doc Duvalier, Comrade Hiss. Year of the HORSE: 1942, 1954, 1966, 1978, 1990. Others may think you don't

ave much upstairs, so think before you neigh. Surprise them with flashes of brilliance, Famous Horses: Vladimir Putin. brilliance. Famous Horses: \
Dr Keshar Jung Rayamajhi, Year of the SHEEP: 1943,

1955, 1967, 1979, 1991. This is he year to stop following and start leading, but do you know where Johann Sebastian Bach, Englebert

Humperdink, the Duke of York, Govinda Raj Joshi.

Year of the MONKEY: 1944, 1956, 1968,1980, 1992. Good at problem solving, can be too smart by half and this year stop scratching yourself in public. Gorbachev, Rotarian Dilip Poudyal, Tarzan

of the Apes, Comrade Hanuman. Year of the ROOSTER: 1945, 1957, 1969, 1981 1993. Being an early bird, you tend to get the worm. But don't underestimate the une worm. Dut don't underestimate the advantage of laziness in this day and age. Famous roosters: Michelle Pfeiffer, Chicken Little, Colonel Sanders,

Comrade Ginger.

Year of the DOG: 1946, 1958, 1970, 1982, 1994. This is an excellent year for romance, but partnerships may change. Lady Dogs should watch out for smooth talkers. Famous dogs: Ernest Hemmingway Emma Thompson, Chatyang

Year of the BOAR: 1947, 1959. 1971. 1982, 1995. Although you may be scintillaring company, boredom is your biggest challenge this year. Famous boars: Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Zhao Ziyang, Napoleon,





NEPALI SOCIETY

General dvnami

he Chief of Army Staff Praiwalla Sumshere Rana paused after pinning the first star on the shoulders of Dr Radha (Shah) KC, and said to her: "I am proud you've become a Brigadier General and made history "Hear Hear Radhathen shared a glass of bubbly with other new generals—all of them men, except her. In fact, Gen KC has become the first-ever man to earn stars in the Royal

Nepal Army. The career of Brigadier General Dr Radha, a paediatrician with the RNA, began with a scholarship to study medicine in 1968. She was the only woman among four Negalis chosen to do so at the Armed Forces Medical College at Pune in India from where she graduated and inined service as a Lieutenant. She went on to become the first

female Colonel, and two weeks ago the first Brigadier General. Gen Radha says it has never been her intention to be the first in everything. "I just wanted to be a medical doctor," she told us. "But I also wanted to join the army because my father was an officer, and I liked its military orderliness and punctuality." The

RNA does not have female soldiers, but women have served in the medical forces. There are now 25 female doctors and 40 nurses, some of whom currently serve in recently-set up field hospitals in different parts of the country. The RNA's legal wing also employs women. The only other army unit that has women is the paratroops, where women fold up parachutes. "There is talk about getting in

more women as supporting forces," says Gen Radha, "I think they can do well in the medical services, as engineers, in the legal departments, as Military Police, in signals and in other clerical jobs." Today, the army's women medics take up assignments in UN peacekeeping onerations and have served in Sierra Leone, Lebanon and East Timor. Doing stints in field hospitals set up around the country is mandatory.

Radha's anaesthetist hus-band Dr Amrit KC was also scholarship to Pune in 1968. He retired as a Major, and Radha can't help quipping: "But he probably regrets his decision now." Dr Amrit is sitting nearby and nods, and says his job these days is to field congratulatory nhone calls from friends and well-wishers. "That's all I have

been doing all week," he says. The doctor couple is happy. and they are clear about the reason for their success. "I made it because I got the opportunity to study," says Radha, "Most other Nepali women don't. This shows that women can all do better if only they get the chance." Their daughter is doing an MBA in Australia, and their son has just finished high school.

Gen Radha now joins seven other Brigadier Generals in the last promotion—unless rumours are true that the RNA is consider ing having a Major General from the medical corps. All we can say is: "Salaam Jarsan!" .



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